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CUTHBERT ST. ELME, M.P.

OR,

PASSAGES IN THE LIFE

OF

A POLITICIAN.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
HURST & BLACKETT, PUBLISHERS,
SUCCESSORS TO HENRY COLBURN,
13, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1857.

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SUMFIELD AND JONES, PRINTERS,
WEST HARDING STREET, FETTER LANE.

CUTHBERT ST. ELME, M.P.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEAUTY OF THE BALL.

THE great hall of the castle was thronged with a motley assemblage. Small gentry and their womankind, dressed in gorgeous colours, promenaded in groups, bent on pleasure and praising the young landlord and his hospitality. Musicians from a neighbouring town filled a gallery devoted for once to its original purpose; while clusters of minor dependants crowded the

entrance, sharing in the pleasure of their superiors.

To these latter Cuthbert specially devoted his attention. Though reserved in manner, the poor had learnt to appreciate his virtues; and they were not a little flattered that even in the midst of his equals he could appropriate some portion of his time to superintend their humbler comfort.

Lady Beaconsfield was at her post from the commencement of the festivities. Supported by Lady Elmwood and Edith, she moved from one group to another with a kind word for each, and gracefully adapting herself to the occasion.

In the country the part of a hostess is by no means without its cares. There guests are captious, and require peculiar attention. It is not enough to provide the entertainment. Partners are to be

obtained, jealousies to be conciliated, and the giver of the feast must also fulfil the duties of a master of the ceremonies.

The three ladies played their part to perfection. Edith, apparently undaunted by fatigue, danced with the most assiduous. The young gentlemen were servile to her smile, and the young ladies not envious of her superiority. The blooming blue-eyed Irish girls regarded her as being from a superior sphere. Their lovers even in their wildest dreams could never aspire to her favour; and they themselves could adopt the fashion of her dress without any sacrifice of dignity, such as would be involved in following the lead of an indigenous rival.

Neither were the gentlemen negligent of their duties. Edward, with heavy care and anxiety at his heart, forced his spirits to the utmost. He drank, not un-

willingly, with the men. He lavished compliments that brought pleased blushes to the cheeks of his lovely neighbours; while Burney, prevented by his lameness from taking part in the diversions of the ball room, presided at a round game established by some elderly spinsters in the library.

And Dawnay assumed the part best suited to his position. Avoiding all communication with his hosts, he retired with the two agents and Father Dennis to a whist table. From his countenance none could have divined the feelings that agitated his mind. But his partner was more than once astonished that a gentleman whose skill was so well known could be capable of such serious blunders.

It was late ere Norah appeared. Cuthbert was walking with Mrs. Burton on his arm as, after a moment's silence, a murmur

of admiration ran through the assembly. He stopped with his partner and turned his eyes towards the principal entrance. A lane was formed by the crowd that filled the ample doorway, and Norah entered resplendent in her beauty.

Her dress was magnificent. A rich dark sweeping velvet dress, relieved only by a fall of priceless lace, served to show her brilliant complexion. Jewels sparkled on her bosom and her head, interspersed with costly hothouse flowers. She walked majestically, bent on conquest. Her eyes shone with an unusual lustre. Her cheek was suffused with a colour that in the daylight would have appeared unnatural. "How very, very beautiful!" murmured Mrs. Burton.

With a shudder Cuthbert turned away.

"What is the matter?" asked anxiously his companion.

“Don't you see that hideous, ghastly face behind her? She may come to that some day.”

The clergyman's wife glanced to the doorway. Mrs. Tooley was there looking with hatred at the passing figure.

CHAPTER II.

THE SUPPERLESS GUEST.

At length the clock struck a quarter to twelve, and the supper was ready. The guests waited for the order of their going.

“Never mind me,” cried Edward; “no ceremony I entreat. I must go round the rooms for fear those dreadful gamblers should forget their appetites. First come, first served.”

The crowd of hungry dancers required

no further invitation. Pair by pair they hurried from the hall to seek the different apartments, where long rows of tables groaned beneath their abundant cargoes.

It was to the whist room that the young host bent his steps. Father Dennis had promptly risen at the welcome rumour, and was hastening to join in the occupation and amusement of the supper-room.

Dawnay was standing alone.

“It is now nearly twelve and the carriage is ready,” whispered Lord Beaconsfield. “If you wish to take any refreshment before your departure, you had better do so immediately.”

“I am ready now. I was about to leave the room by the door leading on the passage, so as to escape the crowd.”

“Then, Sir Hugh Dawnay, we shall meet but once again.”

Dawnay bowed. There was a curious inexplicable smile upon his countenance.

"You shall hear of me before long, Lord Beaconsfield," he replied. Then bowing once again, he left the chamber.

CHAPTER III.

THE MORNING SUN.

At length the supper came to an end. The fun had been uproarious. Toast after toast had been drunk with shouts and cries that made the roof-tree tremble. Then followed one loud wild dance, then another, and all was over.

By groups the guests departed. Some from a distance had repaired to their chambers. Others crowded the houses of

the neighbourhood. Not an inn nor a farmhouse but was filled with strangers. At length the last had gone away. The inmates of the house had said their last good night. The last wheel had crackled on the gravel. The family party were alone in the ball room as the first gray rays of morning gleamed through the open windows. They were resting, almost too fatigued to walk to their bedrooms.

Edward had almost succumbed to the reaction. He was reclining in an arm-chair. Cuthbert was sitting pensive at the end of a sofa, next him was Mrs. Burton, while Edith occupied the remaining place. Julia was leaning over Edward's chair, never fatigued while near her husband. Burney and Burton were conversing near the extinguished fire.

“Where is Lady Elmwood?” inquired the latter.

“She went away early,” answered the hostess, “leaving that young lady under my charge.”

“She did not like to leave papa all night, and she thought Julia might want me.”

“Of course, Lady Edith, your natural inclinations would lead you to dislike a ball,” interposed Burton, maliciously.

“Of course they would,” smiled the young lady, the freshest of the party.

“But where is Sir Hugh Dawnay?” asked Julia.

“He received a letter which obliged him to go,” replied Edward, in a tone admitting of no rejoinder.

“And Lady Norah? We have quite

forgotten her, the beauty of the evening——saving your presence, ladies,” added Burton, humorously. “She used not to be the first to leave a ball-room.”

“Oh! I forgot,” interrupted Edith. “Just before supper I saw her leaving the room, and she told me she had such a racking headache she could sit up no longer.”

“Indeed!” exclaimed Burney. “I wish I had known it before. I must go and see after her.”

“But you must come back and fulfil your promise, Burney,” shouted the clergyman. “Having proceeded thus far, I have determined to complete my retrospect of past days and smoke a cigar in the daylight before going to bed. I told you once, Cuthbert, that I could

resist anything but temptation ; and I am resolved, to use one of our early expressions, to go the entire animal."

"Odious man!" smiled Lady Beaconsfield, reprovingly. "Is this the way you lead the young astray?"

"You are not dissatisfied with Charles' course of education—are you, Lady Beaconsfield?" Mrs. Burton was always ready to fight her husband's battles.

But Cuthbert during the conversation had felt uneasy. A dim foreboding of evil had haunted him through the evening.

"You had better go to your room and take Edith," he said in a low voice, addressing his neighbour. "Indeed I am in earnest, and have particular reasons for my request."

His voice and manner did not belie his words. Rising and taking Edith's hand, the clergyman's wife led the way towards their bedrooms.

"Burney is a long time," observed the clergyman. "I hope Lady Norah is not seriously ill."

Edward turned with an angry gesture.

"What's that?" exclaimed the countess, anxiously.

A loud ringing resounded through the house.

In a minute they heard the sound of rapid steps, and a servant entered the room hastily.

"Mr. Burney wishes to speak to your lordship and Mr. St. Elme, directly."

Starting from his seat, Edward, fol-

lowed by his cousin, strode towards the passage.

“What can it be?” inquired Burton. Lady Beaconsfield, half fainting, had fallen on the floor but for his assistance.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLIGHT.

TOGETHER did the cousins enter Burney's dressing-room. He was standing at an open door communicating with his wife's chamber, leaning against the wall.

He pointed to the bed. It was empty. They rushed forward. A paper was pinned to the pillow.

It contained but a few words:

“Your conduct and that of my relations has driven me to seek a home elsewhere. It will be useless for you to follow me. I have left my country and my friends for ever.”

Burney fell forward heavily, his head striking against the door-post. As Cuthbert supported him, the Earl rang the bell violently.

But a few moments elapsed, and a servant entered with Burton and the trembling Julia.

“Burton, for Heaven’s sake, look after that poor fellow. Julia, send for a doctor. William, order the coachman to saddle three hunters and to get himself ready. Cuddie, come with me. No time is to be lost.” And once clasping his wife to his bosom, he rushed hurriedly from the room.

“ Oh! Cuthbert, for God’s sake follow him, and see that no harm befalls him ”

“ Trust me, Julia, I will never leave him.”

And Cuthbert ran after his cousin.

CHAPTER V.

THE PURSUIT.

WITHOUT a word did the cousins dash down the avenue. No sound had escaped the lips of Edward. But his face was terrible to look upon, and Cuthbert plainly perceived in the pockets of his cousin's heavy great coat the outlines of his favourite pistols. It would not have been good to cross the young Earl in that mood—never till that day exhibited. Cuthbert, while watching him, held his peace. For

some things there is no consolation. Death may be a release from suffering. But what can compensate dishonour?

At length the approach of two or three gates in succession compelled the young Earl to slacken his horse's pace. The coachman behind them was preparing to ride forward when a woman's figure appeared from a clump of trees and performed the office

For the first time Edward broke silence.

"Which way can they have taken, Cuddie? I gave him his choice of roads. I wish I had bound him to name one—d—— him, I should have known he had taken the other. Its no use inquiring for him in the number of carriages and cars."

As he was speaking the click of the latch was heard, which kept open the

gate, and Edward felt a hand placed on the pommel of his saddle.

He turned sharply and perceived the hideous face of the widow Tooley.

“What will your honour give a poor woman to tell ye the way the pretty lady has gone, with the strange gentleman?”

“If you tell me true, Biddy, I’ll give you whatever you like to ask me.”

“And ye’ll never turn me from the house like she did. Ye’ll never threaten to burn me like a witch; or to set the law on my childer, because they pick up a few bits o’sticks.”

“No, Biddy, I promise you.”

“Then take the road to Cork, my Lord, and sure if ye go fast enough ye’ll find them.”

“Here, Biddy, this is for the present;” and thrusting some gold into the widow’s hand, he once more put spurs to his steed.

And as the trio galloped through the mud and quickly disappeared in the distance, the spiteful old hag clutched and counted her sovereigns.

“I’ve been even wid her, the proud divil,” she murmured. “At any rate she’s made my fortin.”

CHAPTER VI.

THOUGHTS ON THE ROAD.

ON their arrival at the first post town, the cousins discovered that the old woman had not deceived them. Taking a post chaise, they proceeded on their way alone, sending the coachman to Boston with the horses and a letter for Julia.

“The boat starts to-morrow at ten o’clock,” observed Edward, on entering the carriage. “I doubt if we shall arrive

in time. However, I am tired, exhausted, and sleepy. Agitation always makes me so."

"You had better sleep if you can. You will require all your strength. Besides, sleeping, the time will fly faster for you, and you will not be so anxious. Trust me, Edward, not a moment shall be lost. Give me the money." And Edward, falling back in his seat, for the moment forgot his cares and his awful errand. But Cuthbert, calmer in appearance, though at heart still more anxious than his cousin, sat brooding over the events of the last few hours, the last few months.

He was not selfish in his meditations, and yet he thought much of himself. How often in life had the disappointment of a moment proved for him the blessing

of a lifetime. Norah, the prize of his youthful emulation, had in the hours of triumph been ravished from his grasp. Treachery had disappointed his hopes, and transferred to another the object for which he had striven. True, his heart had for a time been rendered desolate, his love had been crushed, his life embittered; yet though his treatment had been rough, it had saved him from a terrible catastrophe.

But ere long his meditations turned into another channel. His mind suggested and revolved plans—not for vengeance, but for remedy. Was it possible to avoid publicity, to conceal from the world the bitter humiliation? His heart was sanguine, and yet he could devise no scheme. His blood boiled as he thought of Dawnay's cold-blooded treachery. Yet

he was willing to leave the seducer unpunished, to save the reputation of the victim and heal the wounds of her agonized family.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PURSUIT.

MUCH depended on their arrival at Cork before the departure of the packet. It might still be time to avert the fate of Norah. Already on that long road she might have felt the misgivings of remorse and reflected on the utter ruin to which her crime had hurried her. And even if her better feelings should still be dormant, Norah was susceptible to more frivolous considerations. She loved gaiety, the

world and its attractions; she herself was clever and attractive: she delighted in the evidence of power. Her social influence had been increasing. Her beauty, her conversation, themes of admiration, had gathered round her all that was best and noblest. Could affection for Dawnay compensate for the loss of these advantages? Her penetration must be sufficient to perceive the hollowness of his character, the superficial nature of his accomplishments. What would be his society and that of his few friends in return for the brilliant circle subject to her supreme authority?

If in one moment's pause she had reflected, the remembrance even of her most distant acquaintance must recall the annihilation of that position which heretofore had appeared to combine all that her heart could desire.

The day passed, and the night. The morning again arose, and Cuthbert, lavishing his money, urged the postilions to their utmost exertions. From every stage a mounted horseman was sent forward to order the relays.

At a quarter to nine in the morning they started from the last stage before the completion of their journey.

“How many miles is it to Cork?”

“Fifteen, yer honour.”

Cuthbert had taken a seat on the box attached to the clumsy vehicle. He endeavoured to relieve his mind by questions.

“Can you do fifteen miles in the hour?”

“I’ll try, yer honour; there’s no better horse in Ireland than these four. But there’s been a deal of rain in the night, and the roads are heavy.”

“ You’ll get more money than ever you had in your life if we arrive by a quarter to ten.”

“ Well, your honour, money will do a great deal, but it can’t do every thing. It can’t add a minute to the hour, yer honour, and fifteen miles is a long spell.”

But the horses galloped on furiously; while Cuthbert, watch in hand, grudged each second as inexorably the hand proceeded on its unwearying round.

One quarter had passed of the hour, then another, then five, ten minutes, and then, as he watched the minute hand, the watch stopped. He had not wound it since starting the previous morning.

On, on they go, up hill and down dale. The passengers stand and stare at the unaccustomed sight. On, on go the foaming horses, scarcely heeding their harness or the bespattered carriage, that sways and

groans behind them. With whip and spur the horsemen urge them to their speed, intent on the fabulous reward. Down dale and up hill, on they go, till from an eminence the town of Cork lies before them, with its towers, its squalor, its wealth, and its white villas, dotted down the length of the beautiful harbour.

The postilion waits for one moment to fasten the slipper, but Edward shouts from the window.

“Fifty Irish pounds if we’re there by ten;” and heedless of risk, the postilions fly onward.

And through the streets they fly, careless of accident or of danger. The citizens on foot start aside in dismay, the carts draw up by the pavement, the inhabitants flock staring to the window.

Still on they fly. Two streets more and the harbour is gained.

But from yonder belfry clangs the iron tongue of time. Slowly, slowly, as though in derisive triumph.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

With the last stroke the carriage enters the long street leading to the quay. The cousins strain their eyes down the wide thoroughfare. They shout, they scream, but no one heeds them. The snorting steamer moves swiftly down with the tide, and Norah's doom is, with the past, irrevocable.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. AND MRS. DOWNING.

“THERE’S your money, my man,” said Beaconsfield; “it’s not your fault we’re late.”

“God bless yer honour!”

“And now, Cuddie, what’s to be done?”

“Let us charter a steamer for Bristol. Perhaps this gentleman can inform us”——

A bystander in a semi-naval uniform was the gentleman alluded to.

Civilly approaching them, he volunteered his services.

“I am afraid you were intending to go to England by the steamer, gentlemen. I am sorry to say you are late. None will go till the day after to-morrow. I shall be happy to secure places, gentlemen. I am agent for the company.”

“Is there no means of procuring a steamer at once?”

The agent was surprised.

“Yes, it could be done,” he answered; “but the cost would be very large.”

“We cannot help that, our business is urgent. Is the steamer yours?”

“Yes, sir, the company’s; but I could not venture to give the orders for preparing it without superior authority.”

“Perhaps you will allow me to take the responsibility of requesting you to order it. This is my card. This gentleman is Mr. St. Elme, a member of Parliament.”

“Indeed,” answered the agent in some surprise. “For your lordship, who is I believe a shareholder, and for a gentleman deserving so much of Ireland as Mr. St. Elme, the directors would hold me harmless in a far greater stretch of authority.”

“Depend upon it, you shall not suffer for your kindness. When can we have the boat?”

“In an hour, my Lord. I fear your lordship will hardly like its appearance. It has lately been laden with cattle.”

“Never mind, thanks. Any thing will do. But, by the way, have you a list of the passengers by to-day’s boat; and could I see it?”

“Certainly, my Lord. If you would step this way I could show it you.” And leading the cousins to a little wooden shed erected on the quay, the agent produced his book

There was not room for more than two

persons in the little office. The cousins, therefore, looked over the book together, as the agent stood outside.

“I see nothing—can you?” asked Edward.

“Look there,” answered Cuthbert, pointing to an entry in the register.

“‘Mr. and Mrs. Downing, a valet, and a maid.’

“‘One first class and one second—lady’s cabin.’

“‘Ditto, ditto, ditto—gentleman’s.’”

“Let us ask the agent.

“Did you see Mr. and Mrs. Downing?”

“No, my Lord.”

“Can you tell me the name of this manservant?”

“No, my Lord.”

“Thank you—that will do. You need not say I made any inquiry on the subject.”

“Very well, my Lord, I shall be silent.”

“And now, if you will see about the boat, Mr. St. Elme and myself will go and have some breakfast. I will give you a note for the bank here, who will pay the amount of the charter, and I hope, sir, you will charge any commission you think proper.”

Edward was spending money madly, and yet the events of late years had not added to his resources. But had the journey involved beggary, he would have thought it sin to begrudge a stiver in the execution of his mission.

“My object, Cuddie, is to have everything over before Burney can join us. I almost hope the poor fellow is too ill to move, as I am determined to carry out the whole affair myself, and alone to abide the consequences whatever they may be. I feel myself alone responsible.

I ought, in the first instance, to have prevented that—never mind—to have prevented his coming to Beston at all. It was my foolish weakness that allowed him to be so intimate with us. I could not suspect an old school-fellow of such baseness. However, as I said, Burney shall run no risk of any kind. And as I am afraid of his joining us, I want to get off before he can possibly arrive.”

“Perhaps we shall reach them at Bristol. At any rate we shall find them there.”

“We shall find them somewhere, Cud-die. He shall not escape me if I go round the world for him.”

Edward’s features resumed that wild expression now no longer novel to his countenance.

They entered the coffee-room of an adjoining hotel. They had tasted but

little [since their departure, and nature required some refreshment.

The coffee-room was filled with young officers belonging to the garrison. Near the fireplace two persons were seated of a more advanced age; one, from his dress, was evidently an officer of a superior rank.

One of the two rose on Lord Beaconsfield's entry.

"How dy'e do, Lord Beaconsfield. This is a most extraordinary coincidence. Let me introduce Major Forsyth."

"Most extraordinary, really, as I was just telling the Major. As I was standing on the quay, seeing the passengers take their departure, who should I see as I thought but your sister, Lady Norah. I went up to speak to her, holding out both my hands as an old friend, when to my surprise she stared me in the face, and said, 'I am afraid there must be some

mistake.' I certainly never saw such a likeness in my life. But in looking, I perceived that the lady was not quite as tall as Lady Norah, and she stooped a good deal; whereas your sister is as upright as my friend the Major."

As the vulgar banker thus discoursed, Edward chafed under the infliction. At all times he disliked noisy salutations in the market place. In his present condition the uneducated garrulity of his acquaintance fell like a sharp weapon on his feelings.

To avoid any appearance of embarrassment, however, he introduced his cousin.

"What! *The* Mr. St. Elmc?" continued the banker, talking for the benefit of the hotel. "Proud to make your acquaintance, sir, allow me to have the honour of shaking hands with you. Have you been long in Cork?"

"Only just arrived."

"We are going immediately," interposed Lord Beaconsfield. "By the way, let me speak to you for a moment;" and the banker, in a state of delight, accompanied the young peer to the box, where the waiter had meanwhile spread a substantial breakfast for the travellers.

"My cousin, Mr. St. Elme, is summoned to London in a great hurry; and as every moment is precious, we have been obliged to charter a steamer. I will give a note to the agent, addressed to your house, and will beg you to pay the sum demanded for the hire of the vessel."

"Certainly, my Lord. Proud to honour your cheque for a hundred thousand pounds."

"But I must make one or two more requests to you. These are not to men-

tion the fact of my sudden departure; and to send an express to Beston, with a letter to Lady Beaconsfield, which I will write immediately."

"Whatever you like, my Lord. Are you in want of money to carry you on?"

"No, thank you. I have enough to take us to London. But, perhaps, in case of accidents you might give me a note to some correspondents at Bristol."

"Certainly, I will write it at once. I hope nothing serious is the matter." The banker was a good hearted man.

"To tell you the truth there is. Can you tell me if there was any one with the lady you took for my sister, who by the way was dancing at our ball at Beston the night before last?"

"Then the lady had something to do with your family?"

"Yes, unfortunately."

“ I only saw a maid and a manservant.”

“ Did you hear their names?”

“ Yes, the lady—extraordinary likeness to be sure!—the lady called the man Atkinson.”

Edward and his friend exchanged glances.

“ Thank you, Mr. Connell. I may trust to your secrecy.”

“ Certainly. I am sorry I mentioned your name so loud.”

“ I am sorry also; but it can't be helped now. However, if you would kindly write the note I should be obliged. There is no time to be lost.”

“ Immediately !” And the banker retired to prepare the credential, while the two finished their breakfasts, and hastily wrote a line to those who were anxious for intelligence.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOUSE ASSISTS THE LION.

It was late in the evening of the following day when the cousins drove to Lord Elmwood's house in London.

Lord Beaconsfield had lately purchased a new residence, not as yet complete; and by a tacit understanding Cuthbert was henceforth to reside with the head of his family.

"It really appears a fatality, Cuddie. We arrive everywhere just a few minutes

too late. At Cork, at Bristol, the same thing, and now we are in London we might as well search the sea for a lost anchor."

"Perhaps not. Trusting to their security, they will stay here for rest. Meanwhile a clever detective will assist us materially."

"Good God! Where have I fallen? A detective in search of Norah! Good Heaven!"

And Edward threw himself forward in agony, and worn out in mind and body, great tears gushed from his eyes, and his manly chest heaved sobbingly—convulsively. Cuthbert grasped his hand affectionately.

They were sitting over a hasty dinner in Lord Elmwood's own study, that overlooked the park. It was a wretched meal, the realities of the moment in painful,

bitter contrast with the last occasion, when, together and alone in a London house, they warmly discussed their projects, and life seemed to spread before them so full of promise.

At length, with an effort, the young Earl recovered his composure, if not his equanimity.

“Well, Cuthbert, I suppose it must be; but I entreat you to undertake all this part of the business. It will soon be public enough; but I cannot speak calmly with a stranger on my sister’s disgrace. Nay, Cuddie, I cannot go near my mother. Who will break to her this awful intelligence?”

“For the present, I think, we had better not go near her, and leave her as much as possible in ignorance of the whole transaction.”

“There is no time to be lost.”

“Certainly not. I shall go out directly.”

A knock was heard at the door, and Casey entered.

“I will speak to you later, Casey; I am engaged just at present.”

The Irishman moved backwards to the door uneasily; and Cuthbert could plainly perceive that his appearance had been caused by some event out of the common.

“Do you wish to see me on any particular business?” he asked.

“Yes, sir, if you please. I wished to say two words.”

“Won’t it keep?”

“If you could spare me one minute now, sir, I should be glad.”

Cuthbert followed him to the inner hall.

“Well, what is it Casey? I am en-

gaged on some most important affairs with Lord Beaconsfield."

"I know, sir; and I think that the intelligence I have to communicate to you has some connexion with his lordship."

"Indeed, Casey! You cannot" ——

"I hope, sir, you will excuse the liberty; but may I ask if his lordship's arrival is not in reference to Lady Norah?"

"What can you mean, Casey? Has any one written to you from Ireland any gossiping ——?"

Cuthbert forgot that he had outstripped the post.

"No, sir. I should not have presumed to speak on the subject, did I not perceive the urgency of the case. You know that through your kindness I have obtained a situation on the —— Railway. This evening I was obliged to go on some

business connected with the company to the London Bridge Station, in fact to make some inquiry at the luggage department. I had been kept late at the office, and only arrived at the station a few minutes before the departure of the mail train.—I beg your pardon, my Lord!"

Cuthbert started and looked round. Edward stood near him, listening in breathless attention.

"Something told me that Casey was the bearer of news connected with our affairs," he said. "Go on, Casey."

"Well, sir, as I was standing at the book-stall, whom should I see but Atkinson, Sir Hugh Dawnay's valet, with Mrs. Gottock, Lady Norah's maid. Fortunately, being in a hurry they did not perceive me; and as I had never liked either of them, I said nothing. They were having their luggage labelled. There was not

much; but, strange to say, sir, I recognized—I beg your pardon, my Lord, for mentioning the subject—I recognized a portmanteau, of peculiar shape, which belonged to Lady Norah. I had reason for knowing it, sir, as the day her ladyship was marr —— ”

Here Casey hesitated. He possessed much tact for a man in his position, and he felt the pain that his young benefactors must feel at the remembrance of that wedding. He continued—

“ —— the last time her ladyship left London. It had nearly fallen off the carriage, and I had assisted in securing it. Her ladyship’s name, I recollected, was engraved on a brass plate. I looked for this, and finding it covered over with a large piece of cardboard, I at first thought that the two were decamping with some stolen property. But just at that moment

a gentleman came up with a lady on his arm and spoke to Atkinson. The gentleman wore a large great coat buttoned over his face, and a broad wide-awake hat; but as he spoke I could not be mistaken in his voice. It was Atkinson's master. The lady's face was covered by two thick veils; but there was a strong light at the book-stall, and I at once perceived that it was the maid's mistress."

Edward groaned in agony as he leant heavily on his cousin's arm.

"And did you notice the direction?" asked Cuthbert.

"Yes, sir. All the four hurried to the train, and left the luggage with the porter. As he was placing it on the truck I looked at the portmanteau, and on the cardboard I found a direction—'Mrs. Downing, passenger to Marseilles.'"

“ You saw them into the train ?”

“ Yes, sir. I followed the porter quietly and saw all four get into the same first-class carriage. The gentleman asked for a coupé, but all were engaged, so he desired the servants to get into the carriage with him, and told the guard he would pay for the two extra places ; I have just come from the station, as his lordship still is kind enough to allow me to occupy my old room in this house. As soon as I came the servants told me your honour had arrived with his lordship unexpectedly, and I thought I would make bold to tell you what I had seen.”

“ Quite right, Casey ; and we are much obliged to you for your zeal. Of course I need not beg you to keep these circumstances to yourself. I shall want to speak to you in a moment, perhaps ; so pray keep

yourself within call. There is a fire in the hall."

Cuthbert was always considerate. As Casey stood near the stove the cousins returned to the room where they were sitting.

"What a fool I was not to think of this before!" exclaimed Edward. "Of course they would go abroad immediately."

He poured himself a tumbler of sherry and drank it off. It was not the first nor the second that he had swallowed in the course of the evening, but in his excitement the stimulant was as so much water.

Cuthbert was calm as usual.

"We must start immediately," he said. "They must be going to Italy. We shall be sure to overtake them on the road."

The railroad is only open a part of the way to Lyons, and she must rest somewhere."

"We must take a special train directly."

"Stop a moment. Perhaps we can get on as fast without. A special train might be mentioned in the papers, and all chance of privacy destroyed. Casey probably can tell us something of the trains. It will be better than going to a club to find out. By the way, don't you think we had better take Casey with us. We shall want some one. He is intelligent and discreet, and might be of great assistance. Here, Casey."

In an instant the Irishman responded to the summons.

"Is there any means of getting on to-night besides taking a special train?"

"A luggage train starts at one, and arrives at Folkestone in time for the morning boat to Boulogne."

"That will do then. Will you tell the housemaid to pack up all the clothes I left in London, and get some things ready yourself. We want you to come with us. I will write to the managers, taking on myself the responsibility of your absence; and even if you lose your place Lord Beaconsfield will make it up to you."

"At once, sir. I would follow you through the world."

"I believe you, Casey."

As the latter left the room to make his preparations Edward turned to his cousin.

"You are right, Cuthbert," he said. "You told me at Florence that it was to your mother that you were indebted for all the merits you possess. You have clung to her memory, though her birth

was humble. You have cherished her example, though your family had rejected her. And look at me and Norah. We have through life taken another line, scorning that humility from which our race has sprung. A thousand times sooner would I now be in the position of my grandfather the draper, and my sister an honest woman, than with all the titles and all the connections we have striven to accumulate. I can never again hold up my head, with my sister's shame in every mouth, a byword to the lowest; and she, so proud, so haughty, is reduced to the confidence and the society of two hireling, pandering menials."

The peer rambled on vaguely, as Cuthbert watched him compassionately. At last he fell into a lethargic slumber; while Cuthbert, seating himself calmly at his table, occupied the short space left them

before resuming their journey in writing the necessary letters to Julia, to Burton, to Lady Elmwood, and their bankers. Nor did Cuthbert forget to write an exculpatory letter to the employers of the faithful Casey.

CHAPTER X.

THE TRACK.

THE strangest part of life is the common-place of reality. We never feel the presence of facts so forcibly as in illusion, anticipation, retrospect, or description. How different is an architect's elevation from the completed structure. How much more extended a landscape, how far nobler appears the drawing of an interior, than the country or the hall professedly represented.

Read the description of some splendid fête at which you have assisted. Though faithful to the letter, how far it exceeds your experience. Run over the page of some fashionable novelist, who details *ad unguem* the dress and appearance of some well known dandy. How luxurious is the picture! Velvet dressing gowns, embroidered shirts, brilliant jewelry, rich slippers, delicate essences, and a marble bath of perfumed waters. Become acquainted with the original. Attend his toilet, more complete even than the account rendered by the historian. You will see the velvet, the embroidery, admire the slippers, inhale the jessamine, the violet, the rosemary, and the myrrh. Examine every detail, and the picture in reality will not strike you as extraordinary.

And in the mental emotions, whether in yourself or in another, how comparatively

small are they to what they may appear in the distance. The bereaved mother, the disappointed lover, the ruined merchant, the betrayed friend, when inspected closely, will convey no idea of wonder. Even your own pleasures and your own griefs are small when called into existence. The contemplated revelation of a secret failing may destroy your rest, spoil your appetite, and injure your health. The idea of a grief or a danger may send a shudder through your frame as you revolve it in your closet. But it comes. The secret is revealed, the loved one dies, the burglar disturbs you in the night watches. Your constitution recovers its tone; you pummel the burglar with a poker; and, grieved or mortified, you live on and perhaps grow corpulent. The debtor never feels so secure as when in the Bench.

And thus in a few days, even while engaged in these pursuits, did Edward and his cousin insensibly return to their original nature. Though intent on their object and still living in an abnormal state, the reality of their grief sat more easily upon them. Insensibly as they hurried through well known scenes, did they at times converse on other topics beside that which occupied their present actions.

At times indeed a word or an inanimate object recalled them to the contemplation of their misfortune. The fugitives had changed their route at Chalons-sur-Saone, and the road lay through scenes traversed in former times under different auspices and with different feelings.

Yet there were many causes to divert them from their personal distresses. Even in their griefs they turned occasionally for distraction to the public prints, and all

they saw evinced the approach of troublous times, of events that might alter the whole order of things.

There was a significance in the increased strictness of the passport system, which enabled the pursuers to trace the wanderings of the guilty pair. At every turn, at every village, at every posthouse, the minute description of those that had gone before, and the searching investigation imposed upon themselves, betokened a vigilance and activity not necessary were peace alone in contemplation. And these were not the only evidences of approaching convulsions. At every wayside inn, at every spot where more than one human being was visible, words reached their ears, and facts met their eyes, the precursors of undefined events.

Even on that mountain where of old they had canvassed their youthful theories and

exulted in youthful dreamings, where every stone reminded them of abandoned crotchets, and of hopes still undefined, the subdued voice of the peasant, and the suspicious scowl of the frequent soldier, told them that times were changed, and foreshadowed the advent of conflicting passions and enormous crimes.

And thus absorbed in many contemplations, but never swerving from their hot pursuit, did the cousins, wearied but unwearying, trace step by step the progress of Mr. and Mrs. Downing. Never for a moment had they tarried, for never had the seducer allowed his victim to repose. Money, that powerful locomotive, had been spared by neither party. The criminals appeared bent on some city of refuge. Often did the cousins find unre-moved the remnant of a meal, hastily dismissed by Norah and her lover, or

urge over the same ground the horses already jaded in the service of the fugitives.

From post to post, and from town to town, the track was unbroken. At length the cousins were at fault. Dawnay's carriage, at times almost in sight, had entered the gates of Florence. For a few hours its occupants had remained at one of the numerous hotels. But here the clue was lost. The carriage had been sold for a trifle, and its owners had left the inn on foot. A *facchino* had taken away their luggage on a barrow.

CHAPTER XI.

BREATHING TIME.

THE evening was far advanced when the cousins had arrived at Florence. For the first time since their departure from Boston did they repose their weary limbs. Notwithstanding all their activity and the intentness of their purpose there was no contending against material obstacle.

They had friends of influence it is true amongst the authorities, but the

police office was closed, officials were at their homes or cafés, and nothing could be effected till morning arrived, with the hours recognized by law for legitimate business.

So they went to bed and dreamed. They dreamed of those days at Fiesole when the city seemed so peaceful and life appeared so fair. And Cuthbert, as he prayed on his pillow, remembered the words of the Russian. And Edward prayed for those at home, that loving wife who mourned for a husband's and a brother's sorrows. Though smiles severed them from the scenes hallowed by love and their noble labours, a spirit hovered near them, a spirit of charity and love. It brought visions of home, of loving women and of earnest men.

CHAPTER XII.

A STEP FURTHER.

AT length the morning came and with the warm Italian sun the cousins rose to their labour. Early had they visited every hotel, every small hostelry in the town; but in vain. Nowhere could they find the slightest indication of the fugitives. No name, no arrival, corresponded with the appearance of Dawnay and his companion. Mr. Dowton, the old gentleman at the Grande Bretagne, Mr. Dowsey

at the Italia, Mrs. Dowling at the Isole Britanniche, were in turn examined. To search for the facchino were an absurdity. Never had the master of the hotel seen him before or since the departure of Sir Hugh Dawnay. From his appearance he was not a Florentine. Montelupo or San Donnino probably contended for the honour of his citizenship. Nay, his accent seemed that of Pistoia, while Leghorn had furnished his costume.

At length the hour arrived when a powerful friend would arrive at Florence. He was a powerful man, almost supreme in the state. A friend of Barralevski, the Russian, Count C——, had already shown much interest in the fate and aspirations of Cuthbert. With him the cousins felt their secret safe, while they could count on his assistance and the accuracy of his judgment. He received

them kindly. Taking them to the police office, he easily obtained access to the register of arrivals.

“Downing con signora, cameriere, e cameriera.” The date of their arrival was noted with precision. But to this was limited the information possessed by the police. No carta di soggiorno or permit of residence had been issued. No visa had been affixed to the passport as would have been indispensable for the continuance of their journey. They must still be in Florence, and living without the sanction of the law. Perhaps they had been taken for Tuscans. Dawnay from early habits spoke Italian with fluency.

“If the signori would call again in the evening, perhaps some news by that time might be procured,” suggested the chief of the department.

There was no alternative; and sick at

heart with hope, Edward was forced to curb his impatience till the evening.

“It is very extraordinary,” observed the Count, as with his English friends he turned his footsteps towards the Arno—“it is very extraordinary, the success of this attempt to evade the regulations of the police, latterly enforced with such punctuality. I have never before known an instance of the kind except in the case of political conspirators, who, certainly manage to travel about the country with great impunity.”

“Dawnay has great opportunities,” returned St. Elme. “He has known Italy since his childhood, and has acquaintances in every class.”

“With artists, I suppose, among others.”

“Certainly.”

“And probably with artists of no great eminence—Rapins of all kinds.”

“Exactly. He always professed himself a patron of the arts, and in that character was constantly surrounded with a clientela of disreputable persons who toadied him and extolled his taste.”

“Then, you may depend upon it, that with his knowledge of Italian, and his acquaintance with persons of the stamp you describe, he has found some retreat which will be difficult of discovery. I wish Barralevski were here. He might be of the greatest assistance.”

“In what way?” inquired Beaconsfield.

“Are you not aware that Russians are far better acquainted with our internal state than we are ourselves. More than once has a conspiracy of which our Government was ignorant been denounced

by Russian agents when on the eve of execution."

"Indeed ! You astonish me !"

"Another time I could keep you engaged for hours by narrating instances of their wonderful system. However, our friend has not been in Florence for some time. He is expected shortly. Meanwhile we must do our best without him. Should the police make no discovery by this evening I shall apply elsewhere, and perhaps with success. But it is useless making more confidants than are absolutely indispensable to your purpose, so let us wait for the report you are to receive at eight o'clock. However successful your researches, I think you had better consult me before proceeding further. I must leave you now and shall expect you before or after nine."

Shaking hands cordially with the Count, the cousins, to escape unnecessary observation, repaired to their hotel to occupy themselves as best they could till the hour appointed by their scout.

CHAPTER XIII.

A N O T H E R S T E P .

EIGHT o'clock arrived at last, and with it the agent of the police. He appeared perplexed, but not ill-pleased at the success of his morning's employment. His anticipations had not been completely realized; but enthusiastic in his art, he was rejoiced at having advanced one step in the development of an intrigue. To say the truth, the agent was not ill-pleased at the prolongation of his labours,

nor anxious to arrive at any immediate result. A protracted job would of course increase the reward he was led to expect; and so long as the affair should never come to a standstill, his vanity and enthusiasm for his profession would be gratified by a daily display of ingenuity; while his reputation for zeal would daily be kept alive in the minds of his superiors, and those interested in his researches.

The cousins received him with impatience.

"Have you made any discovery?" they asked, almost simultaneously.

"Yes and No," answered the functionary, with oracular ambiguity.

"What have you done?"

"First I went to the hotel and made inquiries."

“We already had given you all the information that could be obtained.”

“Mi scusino, cari signori, non é vero.”

It is a strange sign of national morality when the habitual formula for courteous contradiction is the accusation of an untruth.

“You did not describe the *facchino*. Much depended on my recognizing him.”

The cousins nodded approvingly.

“I went to the master of the *locanda*, and asked him to show me the stranger’s book. I pointed to the name *Downinghi*, and inquired what had become of that family. ‘Who knows?’ he answered. ‘It is your business to know,’ said I. Then he told me the same story of their departure, with which you are already acquainted, signori. ‘But who was the *facchino*?’ I rejoined. ‘He was a stranger.

The signore walked out and engaged him. He paid his bill, and the luggage was placed on the carrettina. The signore seemed very impatient, and the lady entirely exhausted.' "

"Poor Norah!" thought Cuthbert.

"Scoundrel!" whispered Edward between his teeth.

" 'Give me a description of the facchino,' I said. The landlord did not recollect, but the waiters and the facchino of the hotel remembered him. He wore a hat of Leghorn straw, and on his left cheek there was a large scar."

"Can you hurry him," interrupted Edward, hastily.

"I think we had better let him tell his story his own way. It may be useful."

The agent, however, certainly did trifle with his hearer's patience. Pleased with

his skill, and the gradual development of his narrative, he allowed no detail to escape his graphic powers.

“Well, gentlemen, I then went to the gend’armes, who, from being at the station and in the piazza, generally know all the facchini. I say to them, ‘My friends, do any of you recognize a facchino with a Leghorn straw hat, and a scar on his left cheek?’ None of them answered. But at length one of them came in from Poggio a Cajano. ‘I know him,’ he exclaimed. ‘Costui é poco di buono.’ ‘He is a Sestese, by name Matteo Nardi.’ You know, gentlemen, the proverb—

‘Sesti, Peretola e Campi,

La peggio gente che si stampi.’

‘I have had an eye on him for a long time past, and I know he came to Florence

a few days since. He has gone to an aunt of his that lives near Santa Croce, by name Laura.' So taking the address, I went to find Cempi. It was dinner-time, and he was sure to be at home. My own dinner was ready, gentlemen; but I said to myself, 'These signori are English milordi. It presses them to know about their friends. Why should I not postpone for an hour my dinner.' So I went to Cempi's house and found him at his meal. Said I to him, 'Yesterday you carried the luggage of an English gentleman from the Hotel ——.' He answered, 'The gentleman was not English.. He spoke Italian, as you or I. His wife and servants were English.' 'Then,' I replied, 'tell me where you took the luggage, and who engaged you, and I will give you a piece of ten pauls.' And he then answered, 'As I was walk-

ing in the Piazza del Duomo, a foreign gentleman, a Frenchman, came to me and said, 'Amico mio, you seem in want of work. Go to the Hotel ——— at five o'clock with a carriola, and take the luggage of a gentleman, the Cavaliere Downinghi, to the place he shall point out. He will give you a scudo.' So I went at the time named, and put his luggage on the barroccio."

"And where did you go?"

"I went to the Porta di Roma, and there a carriage came, a private carriage. We placed the luggage on the outside. The gentleman entered with the signora and the cameriera, and drove away. The cameriere took a seat next the driver. The gentleman gave me fourteen pauls, which was more than I bargained for. Then I said to him 'Describe to me the French gentleman;' and he said to

me he was a thin man, but well made, with a large broad hat and a thick dark beard and moustache. 'Did you never see him before,' I asked. 'Never before or since,' answered Cempi."

"So this is all you have learnt."

"All as yet, signori. Now, I must find the French gentleman or the coachman. The carriage was closed, with four places and a seat behind. It did not drive out of the Porta di Roma, but back towards the Arno, turning to the left, near the Villa Torrigiani."

"Of course you will let us know anything you may learn," answered Edward, dismissing their agent with a present such as should encourage him to renewed efforts. But before you go give me the address of Cempi."

"I will take you there, gentlemen, when you like," replied the functionary, fear-

ful of independent action on the part of his employers.

“I do not know when we may wish to see him. We should like his direction in case of necessity. Thank you, that will do.” And the inquisitor took his leave.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN EXPEDITION.

“WELL, what do you think of the story?” asked Edward.

“I think that the Count was right in his conjecture. The man with the beard is some raffish friend of Dawnay’s, and the facchino is probably in collusion with him. Something about the whole affair makes me think this. Cempi is just the sort of man to be employed in the low intrigues of some

tenth-rate artist. The Frenchman from his dress is evidently something of the kind; nay, perhaps connected with some secret society, of which Cempi may be an inferior agent. The best thing we can do is to go at once to the facchino's house, and tempt him by some considerable bribe to bring us in contact with the artist, who in his turn will probably not be inaccessible to the same influence. At any rate let us try. Shall we take Casey?"

"I think there is no occasion. We run no risk, and probably shall not be gone more than half an hour."

But Casey sat waiting for hours, and the young men had not returned.

CHAPTER XV.

THE FACCHINO'S VISITOR.

It was with curiously mingled sensation that Cuthbert led the way to Santa Croce. Well did he know that resting place, where the modern student contemplates with awe the tombs of Dante, Machiavelli, Michael Angiolo, and a host of the immortal departed, who lie buried in that small city, but whose names have filled a universe.

And curious were his reminiscences. Here were the Uffizj, the scene of the

Russian's strange farewell. There the windows of Lord Elmwood's apartments. There he had walked with Edith, bright, trusting Edith; and yonder, near the Ponte Vecchio, would they watch with Edward and with Julia the moon through the dark arcade, or the light structure of the fairy tower. There was the same moon, the same shadows as of yore; but since he had last seen them, how changed his fortunes, his feelings, and his hopes.

His footstep was firmer, as he trod the flags; his voice deeper; his bearing more erect than when, in ardent hope, he had told Edith of his love and his ambition.

Yes, in those days he believed in everything, in beauty and in friendship. His all, his heart, was opened in sympathy—that heart now lacerated by a thousand scars, that marked the battles of his life.

Yes. in those days he believed in the

love of Norah, the truth of Dawnay. And now?—and now they approached the home of a facchino, the lowest of the social grade, sprung from the dregs of a population, and despised even by his obscure equals. This was the man they sought to advance them to the punishment of a friend, and the rescue of an outcast woman. The friend was Dawnay; Norah was the outcast.

Yes, Cuthbert knew the way better than his cousin. In former days Cuthbert, bent on learning, had walked for information, as his friend had ridden or driven for pleasure, dangling by the side of her who was now a faithful, loving wife. Each had chosen the pursuit that best pleased him. Each had reaped his reward. That terrible chase concluded, Edward could return to a happy home, and Cuthbert to his learning and his ambition.

At length the two neared the spot indicated by the police agent. Already had Cuthbert shaken off his abstraction, to watch the complicated turnings of that squalid quarter. His pulse quickened at the approach of action; and he turned to Edward, who was walking at the other side of the narrow street, some paces to his left. By a simultaneous impulse Edward joined him, and, grasping Cuthbert's arm, bade him turn his eyes down the dark street. A solitary lamp burnt at some distance from them, before an image of the Virgin. It threw a flickering flame on a pedestrian.

"I have watched him some time," whispered Edward. Edward was not given to musing. The object of his walk had absorbed each thought, and awakened each sense.

"Look at him now." The stranger was

passing by a cross street; and the effulgence of the moon, hitherto concealed by the houses, revealed every detail of his dress and figure. An ample cloak, spread out in studied folds, concealed a form naturally spare.

“Look at his hat and beard.” They answered the description given by Cempi.

The brim of the hat was broad; the crown almost conical. Pressed over his forehead, it concealed the upper portion of his face; but the thick, black beard was distinctly visible, as it hung profusely over his bosom.

The stranger had slackened his pace, and was looking round him furtively. At length he rapped with his knuckles at the door of a mean-looking house, and in an instant was admitted.

Advancing at a quick pace, the cousins soon reached the house. As they anti-

cipated, it was the abode of the facchino.

“Shall we go in?” whispered Edward.

“No, let us turn down this corner.

He is sure not to remain there long. As he passes we will accost him.” And the cousins took up their station near an overshadowing wall.

CHAPTER XVI.

A RECOGNITION.

THEY had not remained in their position many minutes when their ears caught the sound of the opening door. Two voices were exchanging a few sentences.

“Perhaps he will go the other way,” whispered Edward.

“We shall know directly, and can follow him. There is no other turning between this and the city gate. But, hush, he is coming this way.”

The stranger was humming a little French air.

“ ‘Le grand Napoléon,
Plus hardi qu’un lion.’ ”

“ I have heard that voice before,”
whispered Edward.

“ So have I.”

And the cousins moved quietly towards the end of the street.

In a moment the stranger was within their grasp.

“ Maigniet,” they exclaimed in a breath.
The stranger turned.

“ Pardon, messieurs,” he answered with forced calmness. “ Je n’ai pas l’honneur de vous reconnoître.”

“ Come, no infernal humbug, Maigniet,” growled Edward in a tone not to be misunderstood.

“ Ah! diable!” rejoined the Frenchman, “ L’Irlandais! et le jeune amoureux.

How de do ? Since when are you arrived in Florence ?”

“ Why, Maigniet”——

“ Chut ! Not that name, I implore. I call myself no more Achille Maigniet, but the Baron Arsenne Mireflore.”

“ All right, old fellow,” continued Edward, with the same growl. “ I am going to ask you to do me a little service. Dawnay is here, and you know where he is. Come, there’s no use denying it. If you tell me where he is, I will give you enough money to buy twenty baronies. If not, I shall denounce you to the police for travelling under a false passport.”

“ If you betray me, I am sure of my vengeance. I have friends whose power is unlimited.”

“ Very glad to hear it, I’m sure, Baron. But I have also some friends who don’t live a thousand miles from the Palazzo

non finito; and I tell you as a friend that they are already in pursuit of you."

"Eh! bien, mon cher Irlandais, what is it you want of me?"

"To take Cuthbert and myself immediately to the place where Dawnay is to be found."

"I have not seen him."

"Upon your word and honour as a Frenchman?" asked Cuthbert, impressively.

The artist gave no reply. The appeal to his personal honour was irresistible. The little party walked for a few moments in silence.

"Now there's no time to be lost, Baron," began Edward. "Will you tell us, or will you not? We shall then know what course to take."

"I do not like to talk of these matters

in the street. Come to my lodgings ; there we shall be safe."

"Is this a trap, Maigniet?" asked Cuthbert.

"Chut ! In the name of Heaven, on my honour it is not."

"Where are your lodgings ?"

"Via del Cocomero, close to the cathedral, and not far from this place."

"Very well, we will go with you."

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FRENCHMAN'S PROPOSAL.

“ So you want to know where Dawnay is to be found ? ”

“ We do.”

“ Do not be annoyed with me if I tell you that I know the reason for your wish. Do not think me mercenary if I make a bargain with you. Do not consider me a braggadocio if I tell you that there are great difficulties and even dangers in the way of your finding him ; and, above all, do not imagine you are losing time in the

discussion, as before a certain hour this evening nothing can be done." He spoke fluently, almost eloquently, like most Frenchmen, and impressed his hearers favourably.

"Are you dealing frankly with us, my friend?" inquired Cuthbert.

"On my honour. My wish is to serve you. You have both been kind to me. You have more than once relieved me in my distresses, and have always treated me as a gentleman. Quand à Dawnay, he is a canaille. He has profited by my misfortunes, and has treated me like a dog. Do you recollect how he left me without a penny at Susa, to find my way as best I could to Turin? That is the least slight he has offered me."

"I do not wonder at it," replied Lord Beaconsfield. His teeth clenched as he grasped the arm of his chair.

“No, you cannot. The coward—the traitor! We will crush him—crush him like that;” and the Frenchman stamped his heel on the fragment of a cigar lying on the floor near him.

“Now listen, my friends,” resumed the artist. “I must tell you my little story in a few words. I was born a gentleman. Yes, milord, you will smile perhaps when I tell you that I am noble by birth, and that the title I now carry is mine by right. I began life with a hundred thousand francs, in respectable society, and with little education. I spent my money in a year. I could obtain no employment; so with a little assistance from my old mother, I went to Rome, and studied to become a painter. You know the life of French students at Rome. I studied a little; and travelling occasionally with Dawnay, and repaying him my expenses

in pictures, amused myself a great deal. At last I found myself without a penny, and in debt two thousand francs to Sir Hugh Dawnay. It was after your departure from Florence I found myself in this state. One morning they wrote to tell me my mother was dying. I asked him to lend me a small sum, that I might return home and console her last moments. He laughed at my face, doubted my word, and declared he would not furnish me with means to fly the country and evade my debt to him. So my mother died without me. Her only revenue was a pension she received as a general's widow. My father had been a brave soldier of the Empire. I still owe that two thousand francs to Sir Hugh Dawnay. That must be paid immediately.

“ On Sir Hugh's departure from Italy, I was left in penury with a poor little girl I

had seduced, and a dying child. One morning I was offered an employment that would give us bread. I was sick at heart. The feelings of my birth had left me. I hated not only the aristocracy, but everyone that seemed in any position, however humble, that ensured to its possessor a respectable livelihood. I considered myself endowed with great talent; and thought that any convulsion might ameliorate my fortunes, while none could leave them less promising. My employer held out flattering hopes. For *arrhes* he gave me bread. No wonder I accepted his offer. I am an agent of the 'Holy Society.' Yes, mon ami, rouge jusqu'au bout des ongles. Vive la république démocratique et sociale."

There was a bitter irony in the Frenchman's voice.

"But though I served my master well,

he could only give me bread. My first child had died. Another was coming. My little girl was ill. Every moment she expected labour. Yesterday Sir Hugh Dawnay, who knew my address, came to see me. I was his debtor, and therefore had confided to him alone every change of name and residence. He told me with a laugh of his late exploit. He told me with a curse that he knew you were pursuing him. As you came one minute too late to the station at Paris, he saw you through the grating of the door. You see I know your story. The door was locked, or you would have reached him sooner. Before it could be opened the train had left. He told me he would give me a thousand francs if I could conceal him safely in Florence. How could I resist the offer when bare necessities were wanting to that bambina?

We have means here of concealing a regiment if necessary ; and I consented. That thousand francs must be paid.

“From the place where I met you, I conclude you have learnt the part taken by Cempi in the transaction. He told me this evening of the visits he had received from the police. Already yesterday I had heard of your arrival. The police have no secrets from us. But this is all you know, or ever could know but for me. Cempi told as much as I allowed him. Had he told more, he would—but never mind what would have befallen him—the fate of Emiliani and Scuriatti—a fate I do not feel prepared to meet, and which, if I assist you, you must enable me to escape. I have grown tired of this sort of life. In other countries, in America for instance, I might again become an honest man. I will marry the bambina and take her with me. Now

for the financial part of our compact. You must give me the means to pay into the hands of Dawnay's bankers the three thousand francs I have already mentioned. You must provide funds for my journey with the bambina to America. I must leave Florence immediately. She will join me later. Till then Count C—— will take charge of her."

"What! do you mean Count Neri C——?"

"The same. Is he a friend of yours? By the way I received a note from him to-day, begging me to call on him to-morrow. Perhaps it was about your affairs."

"Probably."

"And you must give me a certain sum yearly, the amount of which I leave to your generosity, as means of support, till I can find some mode of earning a sub-

sistence. America is liberal, and art is there appreciated.

“Do you agree to this?”

“Certainly.”

“Then to business. I told you that there are difficulties and dangers to be encountered before your object could be accomplished. Are you ready to face them?”

“Explain yourself.”

“The place of concealment I have provided for Dawnay is one of those retreats known only to members of our association. You must become adepts before I take you to the spot. At any rate you must be sworn in our open bureau to secrecy.”

“What nonsense this is,” answered Edward testily. “Why cannot you take us straight to Dawnay. We will promise not to betray you.”

“Impossible, my friend. I have taken

an oath, and that oath I will observe. I shall betray my trust sufficiently in taking you to our meeting. I will not perjure myself further by placing in the hands of the unbound the secrets of those who have fed me and trusted me."

"But if we are sworn, we are to a certain extent bound to support your conspiracies."

"Not exactly. We accord certain privileges to Americans, the sons of freedom. They are allowed if they like to join us on a simple oath of secrecy, without any obligation of assistance."

"And without this condition you will not conclude the arrangement."

"Without your consent to this stipulation, much as I wish to serve you and to benefit myself, I cannot go further in the business."

"Then I suppose we must agree," an-

swered Cuthbert. "But no time is to be lost."

"In half an hour the association will meet. In an hour you must be at the door of the bureau."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HOLY FAMILY.

THERE are some places in the world, nooks in streets, or retired courtyards, that seemed formed expressly for plots and conspiracies. At times they are situated in the midst of popular thoroughfares; but by a strange coincidence, whatever their position, they are generally surrounded by gabled houses and other remnants of grim antiquity.

Behind the famous palace of the Strozzi,

second in size only to the grand ducal residence, there lies a mean street, intersected by allies and courtyards, bestrewn with vegetables and offal. In London there are such situations, where children seem more plentiful than in other parts of the metropolis.

The inhabitants of this small portion of ancient Etruria seem employed eternally in buying and selling. At no hour of the day or night does it appear that the stalls are closed for the sale of dry and somewhat putrid fish, and of apples ancient in date.

During the period occupied by the conversation of the cousins with their new coadjutor, an observer stationed in this portion of Florence would have found food for reflection. From time to time gentlemen with threadbare raiment and large beards might be seen cautiously

wending their way in the same direction through the labyrinth of courts and alleys. Had the observer pursued his investigations he would have followed them to a quaint old house, situated in a recess, and forming three sides of a square. A wooden gallery, protected from the rain only by the projecting eaves, ran round the building, apparently forming the only communication to the different portions of the house. The strangers reaching this gallery by a flight of stairs entered the doors of different apartments.

The house was situated on the dark side of the street; and while the moon shone brightly on the houses opposite, this alone was shrouded in darkness. Had the observer been stationed opposite he might have perceived dark forms flitting along the balcony, passing from

door to door, but principally from one wing to the other.

Let us follow one of these men as, rather later than his companions, he ascends the steps, directing his course to the right wing of the edifice. He knocks in a mysterious measure. The knocks are delivered slowly and in a measured manner as though a preconcerted signal.

After some moments the door is opened, and the stranger is admitted into a species of porch. The doorkeeper closes the first door. Then opening the second, the visitor enters through a blaze of light into the apartment.

To another the scene would have appeared strange. For Maigniet, however, it evidently offered no novelty.

The room was large.

From the ceiling hung a chandelier of

steel, beautifully carved. The lights were arranged in the form of daggers; while round three sides of the room, from hangings of iron-grey serge, protruded branches fashioned in the same form. The door was covered with a curtain to match with the hangings, while a black cloth covered the floor.

On the fourth side stood an altar, raised on a higher level than the floor. This and the steps were covered with the same serge, with symbols in black cloth, dotted here and there, half cross half poniard.

Lights burned on the altar. Before it stood a priest in full canonicals, apparently engaged in solemn prayer. The ground was strewn with dark browed men, in different postures of devotion. At one corner a clerk in a white and black surplice, and with a leering countenance appeared to administer an oath to

the new arrivals, and to register their name in a large book before him. Some who came stayed in the room. Others, after taking the nightly oath, kissing an oaken cross in basso rilievo, and bowing to a crucifix, left by another door.

Speaking a few words to the clerk, Maigniet left the apartment, and descending into the street found the cousins, as he had expected, near the scene of these strange proceedings. Requesting them to ascend the staircase, he left them in the space between the doors. Re-entering the room he again approached the leering priest, whom he recognized once more with a grimace which seemed to amuse that holy man.

“Can I introduce them now,” whispered the Frenchman in Italian.

“No, they must wait till the initiations are over.”

At that moment the officiating priest having concluded his prayer, that resembled closely the incantation of some magician, turned to the congregation and began in a high tone of voice his portion of the ceremonial.

“Oh! brethren, oh! my children, oh! my cousins, arise and pray!”

The children arose, but their countenance betokened anything but prayer.

The priests then gave a benediction, and the assembly bowed their heads to receive it.

It was, indeed, a strange sight. The priest, in the gorgeous vestments of his church, standing with his acolyths amidst light and incense in that secret chapel. Around him, in an attitude of humility, flocked men whose features were furrowed with the lines of every passion that could actuate a hellish con-

spiracy. They all wore the same costume. A dark serge tunic confined at the waist by a black leather belt, and trousers of the same material. In the hand or by the side of each was a hat of iron-grey or maroon felt. It may not be out of place to explain the meaning of these symbolic colours.

The long flowing dress of monks is known in ecclesiastical phrase as a "Pazienza," or Patience. Hence, its dark maroon tint has obtained the name in Italy of the "Colore di Pazienza," susceptible of an allegorical interpretation. Hats of this colour are peculiarly obnoxious to the authorities as being affected generally by the "Rossi," or ultra Republicans. While worn, however, no immediate outbreak may be expected. They betoken patience, resignation, and the hope of better days.

The tint which in England is known as iron-grey bears an analogous designation in Italian. It is called "Color [di Ferro." The allegorical signification is, that the scabbard is thrown aside, and that the wearer is at war with the world at large. It is generally the signal of an approaching disturbance, but some furious democrats are in a perpetual state of iron-grey.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE FAMILY AT THEIR DEVOTIONS.

THE benediction over, the neophytes kneeling round the clerk, each grasping a dagger, made responses in the following litany.

The Priest. "Have ye all inscribed your names in the book of our sacred association?"

Answer. "We have."

Here the registrar handed a heavy

tome to the priest, who, placing it on the altar, continued:

The Priest. "Have ye inscribed your age, your profession, your birthplace, your home, your means of existence? Have ye reflected on the step ye are about to take, on the pledge ye are about to give? Do ye know that death awaits the traitor?"*

The candidates murmured assent.

The Priest. "Swear then to reveal to none the secrets of our abode."

Answer. "We swear."

The Priest. "What think ye of kings and of royalty?"

Answer. "That royalty is execrable—that kings are as dangerous to the human race as tigers to their fellow-brutes."

The Priest. "Who is an aristocrat?"

* See the work on "Secret Societies," by Monsieur Lucien de la Hodde.

Answer. "The rich — a devouring flame."

The Priest. "Will it be sufficient to subvert royalty?"

Answer. "All aristocrats must be destroyed, all privileges annihilated."

The Priest. "And what must be substituted?"

Answer. "The government of the people. A Republic."

The Priest. "And aristocrats, do they form a portion of the people?"

Answer. "No. They are to the social body as a cancer to the human body. The extirpation of the cancer is essential to the safety of the person. The first step to remedy the social disorder is the destruction of aristocracy."

The Priest. "And after the revolution will the people be ready for self-government?"

Answer. "The gangrene of social life requires a heroic remedy. For some time the people will require a revolutionary government."

The Priest. "Wherefore do ye seek our society?"

Answer. "To free ourselves from oppression, to rescue our country from the tyrant, to assert the rights of man, and to live with each other in fraternal love."

The Priest. "Noble are your sentiments and worthy of all honour. But do ye know that the path is hard and dangerous that leads to the realization of your wishes. Do ye know that our enemies are numerous and powerful, that our name is prescribed, that courage and right are sole allies? Answer me, are ye prepared to brave the ruin of your fortune?"

Answer. "We are."

"The sacrifice is not difficult," murmured Maigniet to his companions, whom he had rejoined in their concealment.

The Priest. "Will ye risk your liberty, or face death?"

Answer. "We will."

The Priest. "Will ye swear eternal hatred to all kings, to all aristocrats, to all oppressors of humanity?"

Answer. "We will."

The Priest. "Will ye swear absolute devotion to the people according to the Ausonian code prepared by this association, consisting of fifty-eight articles?"

Answer. "We will."

The Priest. "Will ye swear to punish traitors?"

Answer. "We will."

The Priest. "No human feelings shall stay your hand in the cause of truth."

Answer. "None."

The Priest. "Should a mother throw herself on the body of a brother friendly to the oppressors, should a father pray or a sister weep (to each separately), thou wouldst not stay thy hand?"

A slight tremor ran through the line of candidates, but the answer was murmured by each—

"I would not stay my hand."

The Priest. "Though a mistress prayed and wept, were she leagued with the oppressors ye would slay her as though ye had found her faithless. (To each): Thou wouldst not stay thy hand?"

Answer. "I would not stay my hand."

The Priest. "If thy wife, thy child, thy sister, thy cousin, or thy dearest friends, be of the evil ones, they shall be to thee as a bitter enemy."

Answer. "A deadly foe."

"Pax vobiscum!"

"Et cum spiritu tuo!"

Priest. "Death to tyrants!"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "Death to Jesuits!"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "Death to traitors!"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "Obedience to the sacred family!"

Answer. "Obedience!"

Priest. "Death to the disobedient!"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "Death to him who by word or deed shall reveal our secrets *till the time comes!*"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "Death to the coward, or to him who shrinks from his obligations!"

Answer. "Death!"

Priest. "My brethren, my cousins,

my children, once more reflect upon the step ye are about to take, the life ye are about to enter. I will pray for ye."

He turned for a moment in prayer.

Priest. "Have ye well reflected. It is not too late."

Answer. "We have reflected."

Priest. "Then we will administer unto each the oath of the Grand Elect. Then will ye all be cousins. Rise! Brethren, children!"

The candidates rose from their kneeling posture. Placing his hand by turns on the dagger held by each of the candidates, the priest blessed the weapon. Then following his lead, each took the oath prescribed by the Republican formula:—

* "I, a free citizen of Ausonia, united

* For the oath and the fifty-eight articles of the social pact, see Gualterio, "Gli ultimi rivolgimenti," vol. 1, p. 227. Florence, Le Monnier, 1852.

under the same government and the same popular laws, to the establishment of which united state I now consecrate myself even at the sacrifice of my life's blood—I swear in the presence of the Grand Master of the Universe, and of the Grand Elect, my good cousins, to employ all the moments of my existence for the triumph of the principles of liberty, equality, and hatred to tyranny, which animate all the actions, secret and public, of this Sacred Family. I promise to propagate the love of equality in all minds over which it may be possible for me to exercise any ascendancy. I promise, if it be not possible to re-establish the sway of liberty without fighting, to fight unto the death, according to the mode prescribed by this society, fighting under its banners like a true soldier.

“I consent, should I basely become a per-

jurer to these oaths, to be immolated by my good cousins, the Grand Elect, by any torture they may imagine the most excruciating. I offer myself to be crucified in the recesses of a cellar, or in a chamber of honour, naked, crowned with thorns; and in the same manner as was our good cousin, the Christ, our Redeemer and our model.

“Moreover, I consent that my belly shall be torn before my death, that my entrails shall be torn out and burnt, and that my members shall be hewn and scattered, and that my body shall be denied sepulture.”

Priest. “All this ye swear?”

Answer. “We swear?”

Priest. “Then kiss the cross upon your dagger, the emblem of our faith and of our holy cause.”

Answer. “We kiss the cross upon

our dagger, the emblem of our faith and of our holy cause."

Priest. "Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terrâ pax hominibus bonæ voluntatis.

"Cousins! Grand Elect! the good deed is accomplished. Follow then our brother to take our nightly oath, to receive our nightly word. You will then await the commands of the Grand Ancients, and repair to the different sections assigned for your special operations."

The word was "Justice."

And the crew repeated "Justice!"

The pretext for bloodshed.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HIEROPHANTS.

No part of the ceremony had escaped the ears of the cousins. In their position the inner door alone stood between them and the secret meeting. And through this every word of the performance was distinctly audible.

“Pretty scoundrels,” murmured Edward, as he turned impatiently.

In this movement his hat touched the door, and his clothes brushing against the wood created a sound which was heard

through the apartment. General consternation spread through the society. Some appeared inclined rather to break their oaths than encounter danger. Others pressed their hats on their brows, and placed their hands on the symbol of their holy cause. Some looked round for side doors and windows easy of escape. Others crowded with determination round the principal entrance, and murmuring the watchword of their order, prepared themselves for defence.

Magniet alone appeared unmoved. His calmness soon succeeded in restoring confidence amongst his associates.

“Two American sympathizers,” he said, “are waiting to take the oath of secrecy. They are now without, and I will admit them. Extinguish the lights. They will not be sworn here but in the Sections. They must pass under the altar.”

In an instant the lights were extinguished; and the Frenchman, opening the door and separating the curtain, led his friends by the hand to the very foot of the altar.

“Remain here till the room is clear,” he said. Meanwhile dark forms flitted from the chapel to the several apartments. Last of all sallied forth the priests in the *soutane* of every day life.

They separated on the steps leading to the street, and each went his way.

“Ognuno tira l’acqua al suo molino,” muttered the chief hierophant.

“Every one turns the water to his own mill,” and he bent his steps to the right.

“Chi non fa fortuna quando puole, non l’avrà quando egli vuole,” soliloquized the leering priest as he bent his steps to the left.

And each wended his way to an inti-

mate friend as intimately connected with the police. Having given a correct list of those who had attended the meeting, the holy men, with their pockets heavier and their hearts lighter, betook themselves to the pleasures of domesticity, to the soft sleep which hovers round the pillows of the virtuous.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SECTIONS.

THE last affidato had left the apartment before the Frenchman breathed another word to his companions. At length secure of the departure of his numerous confederates, he struck a light and applied the flame to one of the candles hanging in the centre.

“One of my good cousins,” he whispered, “is at daggers drawn with me. He has several times to my knowledge

been ornamented with chains from the waist to the ankle, at Toulon, amongst other places, where I made his acquaintance n giving him a trifle to relieve his necessities. Since that time he has hated me secretly, and never loses an opportunity of doing me a sly ill turn. I have influence enough to introduce you, but not being quite en règle we must act very cautiously. Tell me, have you left an order on my table for the sum agreed?"

"We have, and a letter for Count C——."

"Thank you. And now, my friends, before we proceed I will take farewell of you. Shake hands with me in your English fashion. We shall probably not have another opportunity of doing so, and perhaps we may never meet again. At any rate you will hear from me; and I count upon your promise of assistance

until I am fairly started. Adieu, mon Irlandais; adieu, jeune amoureux." He pressed their hands warmly, and then, like a Frenchman, threw his arms round each of them for a moment.

"God bless you," he added, sobbing. "You have been my true friends. You have conferred on me eternal obligations."

"Nonsense, old fellow. You have done us an enormous service," answered Edward, consolingly.

"And now to business," murmured Maigniet suppressing his emotion.

"One word," interposed Cuthbert. "Had you not better be frank, and introduce us as English sympathizers? Who knows but that some one in the company may recognize us as Englishmen."

"Impossible! Americans are Republicans. Not so are Englishmen, who con-

sequently enjoy amongst us no privileges. Were they to recognize your nationality, nothing would content them but your taking the anti-royalist oath, and vowing to destroy all sovereigns, including your own."

"Well, we are in for it and must take our chance," grumbled Edward; and the Frenchman advanced to the altar.

Taking one of the two tassels that hung on either corner of the table, he drew the cloth on one side like a curtain.

The altar was composed of wood, the front part opening on hinges. Maigniet, cautiously letting down the board, pointed to a flight of steps leading to a room below.

"Are you ready?" he inquired in a whisper.

"Yes," was the hasty reply.

“Are you firm and resolute? We must enter the room, and without even the appearance of misgiving.”

“All right, all right,” whispered Edward.

“Then wait a moment;” and Maigniet, taking the lighted taper from the chandelier, desired his companions to precede him down the stairs.

They had not descended more than two or three steps when their guide halted. Giving the taper to Edward, he proceeded to close the entrance. A cord hung within the altar, and by this the outer curtain was drawn into its former position.

“Now go forward,” he said. “You see this gallows and these daggers lying about. This is the chamber of trial, where our young candidates and those of whom we are suspicious, go through initiatory ordeals to try their courage.”

Descending quickly, the three soon arrived at a narrow passage or rather cell, where a flight of steps, ascending in another direction, led them to a door evidently on a level with the chapel.

“Silence and calmness,” whispered the guide, as, without any premonitory signal, he noiselessly opened the door and ushered his friends into a large chamber.

The room was very spacious, square, and heavy with black. The hangings covered the windows, so as to present a dark appearance to the street. A sail cloth, descending from the ceiling, served the purpose of ventilation. A long table covered likewise with black stood in the midst, surrounded with chairs, and occupied by men who seemed busily employed with papers and portfolios. At one end sat a president, at the other a secretary.

In different portions of the apartment

were scattered small tables, similarly decked and devoted to the committees of the different sections.

At one of these tables stood an individual holding a large scroll, from which he was evidently about to address the assembly.

“That is my friend,” whispered Maignet, without moving his head. “He is President of our Finance.”

His back was turned to the door as Maignet entered, and he proceeded.

“Truth is daily reaching the minds even of those who, under the present false state of society, occupy exalted positions. Those called princes and nobles are qualifying themselves for the honour of serving amongst us. During the last week that aristocrat commonly known amongst us as ‘The Youth of Mirabeau,’ has contributed”——

“Justice!” exclaimed the President.

The password of the night acted as the hammer of the President. The reader turned at the sound and scowled portentously at his rival.

Greeting Maigniet with a wave of the hand the President addressed him.

“Wherefore does our cousin and brother, the correspondent of Gaul, appear to-night amongst us accompanied by strangers, who are unknown to us? Are the strangers proved and elect cousins of the Sacred Family?”

“Justice! I demand the word,” was Maigniet’s reply.

“Justice to our cousin,” rejoined the President.

“Brethren and Cousins,” spoke the Frenchman, “Justice!” Such was the customary exordium.

“Brethren from a land where freedom

triumphs, from happy Columbia, have arrived in Ausonia. Fortune brought us together. The particulars of our acquaintance are neither important nor interesting, nor relevant to the present occasion. We met. It was enough. My heart opened to them. Are we not brethren? Is not the whole human race one large family, united in fraternal love? We wage not war on one another, only on the proud, the arrogant, who have formed for themselves an unnatural elevation. Our brethren seek for information as to our movements. They sympathize with a cause in which they have already conquered. By article one hundred and seven of our bye-rules it is enacted: 'All citizens of happy Columbia shall be considered cousins of the Sacred Family. Should they express a desire to join our society for the sake of proffering advice

and assistance, they shall be admitted to our meetings on the simple guarantee of an approved cousin, and on taking the simple oath of secrecy during the proceedings. They have no king against whom to wage war. Their fight is ended.' I ask for these cousins, Edward Brown and Cuthbert Smith, the hospitality vouchsafed by the statutes of our Family. I have not yet finished, Cousins and Brethren. These cousins are willing to contribute to our funds. Nay more, a fleet from happy, regenerate Columbia floats in the waters of Ausonia, bristling with guns. In time of need they can afford a refuge from the oppressor. Brethren and Cousins, I demand for these our brethren and cousins the simple oath of secrecy, to be administered in your presence, and which shall secure to them the freedom of our Family. Justice! I have spoken!"

The speech was followed by low murmurs. Suspicion must go hand-in-hand with secrecy. The cousins were loath to trust even those most trusted.

“Justice! I demand the word,” observed the secretary, with the calmness distinctive of his profession.

“Our cousin of Gaul is right as to the rule,” he continued; “but with due deference, I must submit that he has acted with less than his usual caution.

“The rule has for a long season been practically in abeyance, having led to inconvenience; and I submit to the Grand Elect cousin President, that our cousin should not have thus hastily introduced two strangers to our most secret meetings without previous consultation.”

“Has our cousin any consideration to urge?” rejoined the President, who, as is often the case in other assemb-

lies, was the instrument of his subordinate.

“Justice!” answered the Frenchman boldly. “I have. I am not aware by what rights our cousin, the secretary, assumes the task of reproving me, one of equal rank with himself in the same family of the universe. You know well, Grand Elect, that I am here to represent a branch of the Family revered amongst us. I am the accredited Envoy of the Supreme Tribunal. The case was urgent. Our cousins will soon leave these shores to carry a report to their glorious brethren. It was within my competency to carry out the rules as allowed universally, as practised amongst my Gallic brethren. Grand Elect cousin President, I demand the oath. Justice! On your sacred oaths, Elect, ye cannot refuse it with impunity.”

“The boldness of Maigniet’s demeanor

struck the assembly with awe. Unwilling to offend so powerful a confederate, they were about to comply with his demands. But there was one to be intimidated neither by boldness nor position. It was the spokesman of the Finance Committee. His body bore the ineffaceable brand of infamy. His penal career had sharpened all the faculties of his mind.

"I demand the word," he cried, "Justice and the dagger!"

A general shudder ran through the crowd, who during the discussion had abandoned their tables and now stood attentive round the central board.

The cry was, the prescribed formula for denunciation.

"I denounce our cousin of France as a traitor to the family. I have watched him. During the initiations he introduced the strangers into the porch, whence doubtless they witnessed all our sacred

mysteries. I was standing on guard without. I have long suspected him."

"Justice!" interrupted Maigniet. "I was within my right. The rule runs '*during the proceedings.*' My friends were about to take the oath, and I was justified in placing them under shelter. Is 'our cousin ignorant," he added, with irony, "that one of the fundamental regulations of our family is to afford shelter to the weak and diseased. One of our brethren is suffering. Would he have had him exposed to the dangers of a cold wind and a winter's rain?"

"Justice and the dagger!" hissed the galley-slave—the evidence of malice and villainous passion concentrated on his hang-dog countenance. Even Maigniet, with all his cool audacity, felt his heart sink as though in a death-struggle. On the eve of deliverance from crime and of

an innocent future was he to fall a sacrifice?

A noise reached the assembly from the street below as of a horse trampling.

“Hark!” shouted the galley-slave. “He has betrayed us. Already the bloodhounds of the government are loosened on us.”

With terrible calmness Maigniet restored composure. “Let one of our cousins ascend to the loophole, and discover the reason of this disturbance.”

The President gave the necessary orders.

“Justice and the dagger!” again exclaimed his inveterate foe, in the highest tone consistent with safety.

“Cousins! Brethren! I denounce the traitor. Form the tribunal. His comrades are not Sons of the Free. They are not cousins from regenerate Columbia. They are sons of perfidious Albion; where,

under the cloak of freedom, reign in full force the accursed laws of royalty and aristocracy. Form the tribunal. They are spies, traitors!"

A voice shouted from the corner. It was that of the cousin sentry.

"The police are on us!"

"Justice and the dagger!" screamed the galley-slave, brandishing his poniard. "If we must die, let us die worthily. Let not the perjured cousin escape his doom, nor his treacherous accomplices."

"Villain! how dare you?" shrieked Cuthbert, as he clutched the galley-slave by the throat. Already Edward and Maigniet were surrounded by the mob, maddened with anger and with fear.

But Cuthbert's voice was checked as he fell heavily to the ground, struck from behind by an insidious hand.

His mind passed away. But in the

whirl a dim vision floated through his brain.

Visible in the confusion, and amidst the throng, was the massive forehead and acute eye of Barralevski, the Russian.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RECOVERY.

AT last Cuthbert returned to consciousness. Slowly, slowly he opened his eyes, and life once more glimmered on his mind, and with it the figure of Barralevski. Then once again he closed his eyes, and fell into a soft, refreshing slumber.

It was evening when he once again awoke to consciousness.

By the side of the fire sat the Russian

in his usual posture, his hand on the crutched staff, his chin leaning on his hand.

Edward stood near him, leaning against the chimney, and dressed in deep black. A table stood between them covered with papers and letters.

Cuthbert did not speak. Collecting his scattered ideas, he at first contented himself by watching his companions.

The Russian was the first to break silence.

“There are some seasons when events crowd on us, bad or good.”

“Yes,” answered Edward. “During the last two years more has happened to me than in all my life before. Certain things of course were natural: my coming of age, my entry into political life, and so on. But in addition to these, a heap of circumstances have accumulated round

me sufficient in my mind to have occupied years. Heaven! to think that my poor mother should die without my seeing her once more ! She, so good, so kind ! I feared that Norah's conduct would be her death, and my anticipations have been too truly realized."

Cuthbert stared, scarcely believing his senses. He must be in a dream.

The Russian continued.

" Yes, my young friend, your lot is to be pitied. How happy do the unthinking world consider you, surrounded by all that ought apparently to make life happy—wealth, position, a handsome and affectionate wife, and to-day, as you have heard, a promising heir to smile on you as you advance in the path of years. Yet, there are struggles in prosperity."

" Indeed there are. My poor wife without me at such a crisis ! Thank Heaven,

my mother heard of the child's birth before her death. Thank Heaven, that some gleam of happiness cheered her last moments."

"It is a cause for rejoicing. Many years have I known that excellent, noble-minded woman. Many are the kindnesses she has heaped upon me. Some day you will know the history of our acquaintance, and it will tend only to enhance the love you bear her memory."

They relapsed into silence, full of thought. Suddenly a movement from the bed startled the pair. Raising himself with an effort, Barralevski was soon by the side of Cuthbert. Edward was already leaning over his cousin's pillow.

"Is it a dream?" asked Cuthbert.

Barralevski was intent and impassive. His features betrayed no sign of emotion;

but through the silence of Edward and Cuthbert, his agitation was plainly visible.

“Then it was no dream,” groaned the wounded man. “No dream—no dream.” His features assumed an expression of calm, and a smile of fearful energy. Such were the tokens of his grief. A stranger might have thought him cold and heartless, but to his friends the signs betokened the hidden agony.

“Edward,” he continued, “our mother is gone. Henceforward we must live for your little one. How is Julia?”

“She is well, thank God!”

“Thank God indeed. You must return to her at once.”

“Not yet, Cuddie. She has begged me not to leave you.”

“How kind! how considerate! But how long have I been in this condition,

that she could have heard of my illness, and even answered the letter?"

"Repose yourself, my friend," responded Barralevski; "you have been under the doctors a month and more. In this country there is no capital punishment; otherwise the skilful artist who placed you in this state would have had time to be hung for assassination and sedition. As it is, he has returned to his normal occupation at the galleys. He was evidently no unpractised hand. A little further, and we should not now have been standing by your bedside."

"Pray, assist me to rise. Thanks, that will do."

And Cuthbert leant back against his pillow.

"Now, my friends, you must tell me my history. I have a faint recollection, Count Barralevski, that on that evening

I saw your face at the moment I lost my senses. How did you find us out?"

"We will talk of all this another time, Cuddie. The doctors particularly told us that in case you awoke, nothing was to be said that could agitate you. You have been very ill, my old man."

"I know I have, Edward. The doctors doubtless understand my constitution by this time, but they cannot know my disposition. Believe me, that if you wish me to recover quickly, you had better let me know the real state of affairs. Suspense and anxiety will agitate me much more than any story, however long or eventful."

"Do you say that conscientiously?" inquired the Russian.

"Indeed I do."

"Well, my part of the story is soon told. The evening of your interview with Maug-

niet I arrived at Florence. Count C —— had offered me an apartment at his house, and I drove up unexpectedly to the door about the same moment that you were having your interview with the police agent.

“ If you recollect, you had promised Count C —— to call upon him at nine o'clock. At that hour I was with him, anxiously expecting to see you. But nine o'clock came, and neither of you appeared —ten o'clock struck, and still we were waiting for you.

“ At length, as we had nothing to do, and were both anxious at your delay, we determined to call at your hotel and to discover the reason of your absence.

“ We found your follower more anxious than ourselves, and he explained to us that after a conversation with your agent, you had gone out together, informing him that you would return in little more than half

an hour. Nearly three hours however had elapsed without your re-appearance; and under the circumstances we felt assured of some occurrence out of the common. Our first idea was to apply to the police agent; and this we did without difficulty, as the Count is well acquainted with the homes of all that class of persons. We found him in a state of excitement, owing to some recent intelligence of a secret meeting composed of the least reputable portion of the soi-disant liberals—of those whose acts discredit the name and intentions of pure though perhaps misguided patriots. From the agent, however, we gathered the circumstances of his visit to you, and the result of his morning's researches. Before driving to the residence of Cempi the facchino, however, a fortunate idea crossed the brain of my companion. Not far from the police agent's in the Via del Cocomero, there lived

a person in whom the Count took some interest—an artist, forced by want to take part in the proceedings of the Ultras, but desirous of obtaining some more reputable means of livelihood. The Count was desirous of calling on this man to give some relief to his suffering wife, and also with a vague hope that from him we might obtain some intelligence that might be useful, whether we found you or not. On entering the sitting-room, what was our surprise to find on the table a letter addressed to the Count in your handwriting, though bearing the signature of Lord Beaconsfield.

“I did not trust my French sufficiently,” interposed Lord Beaconsfield.

“You did not reveal any secrets; but the letter was sufficient to show your relation with the artist Mireflore or Maigniet. Our conjectures were con-

firmed by the maidservant of the house, who told us that two gentlemen had entered some time before with the artist; that after some conversation he had gone out alone; and that the two gentlemen after remaining half an hour, had also left the house. The description she gave us was sufficient for identification.

“Our next step was to return immediately to the police agent's. He was in earnest conversation with a priest, and for some minutes he could not speak to us. On the priest's departure, he informed us hurriedly that intelligence had been just received that the meeting was of a nature far more important than had been anticipated; that he had just received the list of persons present, amongst whom, it appeared, were some who had for some time escaped the vigilance of the authorities—amongst others, the President of

Finance, a dangerous conspirator; that as the meeting was not so harmless as had first been imagined, but was only the precursor of an immediate outbreak, the original intention of the authorities to allow it to pass undisturbed would be changed; and that he was about to collect a sufficient force to break into the house, and make as many arrests as possible.

“ At Count C——’s request the list was shown to us. In a note at the end was contained a piece of intelligence. ‘ The brother of Gaul, Aristide Margot, the revolutionary pseudonym of our friend, introduces two forestieri, Columbian sympathizers.’ Anxious for your safety, we both proceeded to the chief officer of police, to explain to him your position, and to secure you and Aristide from molestation. Taking the agent with us in the carriage, we of course obtained the

necessary assurance; but finding that matters were assuming a very serious aspect, we obtained permission to accompany the expedition. And as we proceeded, Fortune seemed to favour our undertaking. As we arrived at the beginning of that little '*urbs in urbe*' where the house was situated, we met a man hurrying away in whom the Count recognized a tradesman—honest man enough, but implicated almost against his will in revolutionary intrigues. With a sudden decision, the Count seized this man by the arm. 'You have just come from the Family,' he said: 'What are they doing?' The man for a wonder respected his oath and refused to reply; but the Count showed him the police and military force accompanying us, and showed him the only chance of escaping arrest and punishment was to tell us the truth. He had escaped, un-

willing to take a part in the proceedings. They were about to form a tribunal on the Frenchman, for having improperly introduced two American strangers. The expression is more significant to our ears than to yours perhaps. So we hurried on. The police knew the plan of the building, they broke in, and the rest I need not narrate to you."

Cuthbert had listened calmly to the exciting history.

"Thank you," he replied. "And Maug-niet, what has become of him?"

"We managed to secure his escape to the Count's house. The next day he was married in the Count's study to the poor girl with whom he lived, the daughter it appeared of one of the Count's contadini. The next day we managed to get him off safe from the police and

his old accomplices. She was confined within a day of the ceremony, and to-morrow she sails with her baby by an American merchant vessel from Leghorn. Don't make yourself uneasy about him. He is sure to let you hear of him. Every now and then his lordship will receive, if not a letter, an oblong strip of lithographed paper, bearing his signature, and requiring that of Lord Beaconsfield."

"Yet I have hopes of him. He seemed anxious to do well."

"Let us have hopes then. America is the best place for him. Americans are rich and liberal, and will pay well for their portraits. Is there anything else you want to know? It appears to me that the medical men will be annoyed if you are not ill after all this conversation."

“Yes, there are some things I want to know,” answered Cuthbert, his eyes wandering involuntarily towards Edward.

“You may speak openly before Count Barralevski,” replied the young Earl to the mute appeal. “He has been kindness itself; and during your illness I have guided myself entirely by his advice.”

“And what then has become of that unhappy girl?”

“Heaven knows, unless her own account be true.”

“Can you read a letter?”

“No; will you read it?”

“I must tell you that two days after the affair with the Society it reached me by post. Of course our presence at the meeting could not be concealed. It was the gossip of the town. They thus found out our arrival and I suppose our address.

I confess I do not like the flippant tone of the letter."

Sitting close to Cuthbert, Lord Beaconsfield read.

"My dear Edward—Pray don't expose your precious life again on my account, nor Cuthbert's. I confess, for my part, that I did not give him the credit of being so revengeful, and thought that bygones had been bygones."

"Never mind what she says, old fellow."

Cuthbert smiled a sickly smile, half of pity half of contempt.

"Go on," he answered in a low tone.

"Poor girl! I see Dawnay's hand already."

The young Earl resumed his reading.

"As for me, pray trouble yourself no more about me. I am in good hands with the man I love, and nothing can separate us. He will behave to me as

honourably as man can. We shall go either to some part of Germany, Sweden, Norway, or Denmark: never mind where, brother mine, and do not follow us. Your society is not required, and your chase will be useless. However, we are going to one of those countries where divorces are easy, and where divorcées are not so ill-looking upon as in England. I can there easily procure a divorce from the lame little gentleman who employs you to fight his battles, and there I shall be united in the bonds of *legal matrimony* with Sir Hugh Dawnay, the *only* man I ever *truly loved*, as you may tell poor dear Cuthbert.

“To England of course I shall never return; but I dare say I shall be quite as happy on the continent even without my agreeable family. So, good bye, dear Edward. Pray tell all your friends that

if ever they wish to see us, we shall be delighted to see them; and believe me,

“Your very affectionate sister,

“NORAH DAWNAY.”

“Dawnay wrote every line,” exclaimed Cuthbert.

“Yes; curse him! But if ever I forgive her may I be”——

“Hush, Edward. You may never see her again. You are incensed with her, and justly; but if you cannot forgive her, forget her. If you cannot think of her without anger, forget her existence for bad as well as for good.”

“Perhaps you are right, Cuddie. But I must first finish my story. When I got the letter I was for going after her, but the Count advised me not. That scoundrel appeared desirous to make all the reparation possible. Any meeting would

increase the scandal which, perhaps, was already dying out. In fact he gave me so many good reasons that I at last gave in."

"Not without a letter from Mr. Burney, however," interposed the Russian, who had been an attentive listener to the dialogue, "the noblest letter ever penned by injured man."

"Yes, God bless him," rejoined Edward vehemently. "I am no longer his brother-in-law through that worthless creature, but, thank Heaven! I am still so through Julia."

"Whom you had better join immediately and without loss of time," answered Cuthbert. "I am quite well now. In a few days I shall be able to move, and Casey will be quite sufficient as an escort."

"Come, none of that, Cuddie. You have stuck to me through good and evil,

and I should never forgive myself for leaving you alone in your present state. No, old fellow, the sooner you get well the better, but not an inch do I stir without you. So don't say another word on the subject."

"Very well," smiled Cuthbert faintly. He was in no condition to carry on an argument.

"Would that I could accompany you to England," said the Russian. "But unfortunately for myself, I must bid you goodbye to-night. I have delayed my departure till now; but as you are on the high road to convalescence, I must attend to affairs of the first importance, requiring my presence at Paris. We shall probably reach there in the course of a few weeks. Your address will, I suppose, be Meurice's. Of course Monsieur Vantini secures all English custom.

I knew him when his father was chamberlain to Napoleon at Elba. I will not, therefore, say the broad English goodbye, but the modified *au revoir*. Your young constitution will enable you to travel in a few days. Till then, farewell."

And taking a kindly leave of his young English friends, the Russian moved noiselessly from the room.

CHAPTER XXIII.

NORTHWARDS.

It needed foresight much less extended than that of Count Barralevski to prognosticate the early recovery of Cuthbert. The wound once healed, he was ere many days enabled to drive round the green Cascine, and to revisit those sites of beauty which he loved so well. He would fain have remained in Italy for ever. The calm beauty of the scenery and the pleasant memories with which it was associated, memories of Edward's youth, and

Edith's gentle, childlike companionship, disinclined his mind for the more rugged contemplations of his own country.

And amongst those who toil who has not experienced similar sensations when, far from the scenes of daily cares and daily drudgery, he lives but for pure enjoyment, and pauses in the current of his life? Here the young man can dream and love at his leisure ; or the father may wander with his children, listen to their loving prattle, or tell them tales of instruction and amusement, unchecked by the idea that the minutes callously fly past to the hour when, at his chambers or his office, life waits impatiently with her goad and her galling harness.

But however sweet these hours of repose, Cuthbert was bound by ties of triple brass to his native land. Not only did

he feel acutely the responsibility of his own duties. To these were superadded the care of Lord Elmwood's interests, and now the necessity of Edward's presence at his home.

The fourth or fifth day of his recovery he opened the subject to his cousin.

Their conversation had turned to poor Lady Beaconsfield.

"I have had a letter about my poor mother's property," began the young Earl. "We are executors, and have some papers to sign. I think I shall write to the lawyers to send them here."

"Why should we not start at once?"

"Because the doctors say you are not yet fit for a journey. You have only been able to drive about an hour or two every day."

"But why should not that hour or two be spent on the road? If we had started

the first day I went out, and driven two hours every day, by this time we should have been ten hours nearer England. It is only a question of sleeping at a different inn every night, instead of the Grande Bretagne here. Every day I shall be better. In a week or ten days' time, under any circumstances, with these two hours or three hours a day, I should be pronounced well enough for a journey. Why not by that be already advanced a few stages on our road?"

"But the beds would be badly aired, or something would make you break down."

"Nonsense. Casey has learnt to dress the wound; and with a good courier trotting on bere us to secure rooms, one inn is as good as another."

"Well, Cuddie, perhaps you're right. Ask Z——. I would trust to his word.

He's not the kind of man to keep a patient beyond the time necessary."

The permission given, Cuthbert took matters into his own hand. The kind, honest surgeon gave the necessary sanction, and the day succeeding the conversation the cousins slept at Lucca.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A RESTING-PLACE.

AFTER all, travelling was not exactly the same as the daily drive. Very good inns are not to be found at the end of such very short stages as came within the scope of the daily journey. Sheets were occasionally damp, notwithstanding the best exertions of an intrepid courier. Heavy rains made heavy roads; and the carriage met with more jolting than could be

found in all the macadamised roads or flagged streets around and in Florence.

Nevertheless Cuthbert would not give in. As he drove on, the scenery, beautiful even through the gloom, distracted his mind; and the discomfort of the road was compensated by the reflection, that each jolt brought Edward nearer to his wife and the welcome little stranger.

To avoid the passage of the Mont Cenis, the cousins took the road by Nice. At every turn the signs of approaching troubles accumulated in redoubled force and numbers. Incendiary placards in solitary places that had escaped the vigilance of police authorities, noisy crowds in country villages enjoying the same immunity of isolation, told travellers far more than could be learnt in the forced tranquillity of towns. "Coming events

cast their shadows before," and darkened the whole horizon. Wars, rumours of wars, rumbled menacing at no far distance.

Weary and waysore, Cuthbert gladly saw from a height the fair town of Nice at no great distance. Here he had promised himself unwillingly and at his cousin's repeated solicitations a few days' repose. Though reluctant at first, he felt a relief at the prospect of a short respite. Often as, feverish and jaded, even by the softness of the well-cushioned carriage, he drove past the lighted cottage filled with the shadows of happy peasants quiet and at home, his heart had longed for a bed however humble, for the quiet enjoyment of a fireside.

More than once had he vowed to his own home, once more regained, the undis-

turbed possession of his remaining days. Travel, that delight of his health, had become the torment of his sickness. Relentless was the punctuality of postboys; and galling was the unexpressed but apparent restlessness and impatience of his companion. As from town to town, and from village to village, on the assumption of his improved health, the journeys increased in length and rapidity, so did he feel his strength diminished and his longing for rest grow more intense.

At length he could not conceal from Edward his increasing debility. True, they had divided into twelve days a journey that in health might easily have been accomplished in four. But as to the poor a small loss is ruin, so to Cuthbert even this modification was too great an exertion. At Nice, however, he could obtain the necessary repose and medical

assistance. And with pleasure, as the rain pelted without, did he throw himself on the cushions of a well-warmed room—the pleasure doubly enhanced from the consciousness that some days must elapse ere the luxury was to be abandoned.

CHAPTER XXV.

AN OLD ACQUAINTANCE.

THE next morning Edward was stirring betimes. The day dawned fresh and beautiful. The Mediterranean was smooth and blue. The bright southern sun shone brightly with its southern splendour.

Edward consequently was bent on an excursion. He was not fond of sight-seeing. Few people are so really. But he saw sights with determination. Wherever he went he set to work with dogged

energy, travelled through miles of picture galleries, ascended the highest monuments, and, grumbling, laboured up the most arduous mountains.

Cuthbert rose late, and sat long over his breakfast, dallying with a poet's not a glutton's satisfaction over the southern meats, fish, and fruits, that so soon he should leave behind him.

His coffee was still by his side as he turned his chair to the English grate provided by the enterprising landlord as an additional attraction to golden English visitors. An English newspaper lay on his knees as, with the temporary sensuality of an invalid, he gave himself up to the luxury of contemplation and idleness.

He was a changed man now. His theories were exploded, his flight reduced within due bounds, his mind chastened, his hopes defined. And thus his reflec-

tions turned to his future duties and exertions. Parliament, so long abandoned, must be resumed. Ireland no longer required so much of his attention. Lord Elmwood would soon be sufficiently recovered to attend to his own affairs. He had now time to consult his own inclinations, his own ambition. Even the immediate object of his journey, the search for Norah, had been abandoned. True, if possible he should wish to ascertain her prospects of future happiness. But these had no immediate claim on his attention.

He had been sitting some time in one position when Edward re-entered. He was breathless with hurry and agitation.

“Cuddie,” he began, “do you believe in ghosts?”

“Why? The question is not to be answered in a moment.”

“Because the most extraordinary thing

has happened. This morning as I went out a woman passed by me suddenly whom I partly recognized. I turned round to look at her and she was gone. As I was coming in just now she passed me again in the same manner. I then went to that street at the back to buy a pair of gloves and entered the house by the door in that street, when who should I see with her back towards me but the same woman. This time I looked at her attentively, and sure I am that it is Mrs. Gottock, Norah's old maid."

"You astound me. What can she be doing here?"

"I don't know. I saw her go up stairs. I shall go and watch at the back door of your bedroom." And suiting the motion to the word, Lord Beaconsfield passed into Cuthbert's bedroom.

He had not left a minute when there was a knock at the door, and Casey stood on the threshold.

“Can I come in?” asked the Irishman.

“Yes—pray do,” responded Cuthbert, somewhat querulously. “At any rate don’t keep the door open.”

Casey entered cautiously.

“His lordship is not here—is he, sir?” he asked, looking round the room.

“No, he is gone out, but will return in a few minutes.”

“I am glad of that, sir,” answered the Irishman. “There is a person who wishes to see you.”

“Who can it be; I know no one here.”

Casey approached his young patron with a look of anxiety.

“Well, Casey, out with it.”

“It is Mrs. Gottock, sir, Lady Norah’s maid.”

“Indeed, Casey!” answered Cuthbert with a calmness astonishing his follower. “What is she doing here? Is her mistress with her?”

“Yes, sir; they are quite alone at Nice.”

Edward’s voice from without interrupted Cuthbert’s rejoinder.

“Come in, Mrs. Gottock, come in; you need not be afraid. Come in and tell us your story.”

The woman entered trembling.

“If you please, my Lord,” she began, “I did not expect to find you here.”

“But as you have found me, pray let that be no inconvenience to you.”

“If you please, my Lord, I was told that Mr. Cuthbert was alone. I saw your lordship come home and then go away

again, and I made sure to have some private conversation with him."

"You did not calculate with your accustomed sagacity, Mrs. Gottock. I came in by the same way you did. Pray, tell us your business."

"Why, my Lord, I had rather speak to Mr. St. Elme alone, with your lordship's permission."

Edward looked towards his cousin for counsel. Cuthbert answered firmly.

"Anything you have to say to me respecting yourself or your mistress, must be said before Lord Beaconsfield. On this subject I can have no secrets from him."

"Well, sir, all I have to say," answered the maid saucily, "is, that Lady Norah is at Nice, and much wishes to see you. She is quite alone, sir, and in great trouble. She wishes to see you only, and not

his lordship, for fear he should lose his temper."

"And where does your mistress live?" interrupted Lord Beaconsfield impatiently.

"That's my secret, my Lord. You have forced me to give my message in your presence, but I certainly shall not tell any one but Mr. Cuthbert our address."

"Your mistress' address I suppose you mean, Mrs. Gottock," observed Casey, angry at the servingwoman's presumption.

"Not at all," she rejoined, with an insolent toss of the head. "Of the two, rather my address. My mistress, as you call her, has for the last fortnight been without a sixpence; and but for a few savings I had with me, we should have had no address at all."

Once more that fearful look bespread Edward's features.

"Come into the next room, Edward,"

exclaimed Cuthbert, preventing his cousin's words. And rising he led the young Earl to his bedroom, closing the door as soon as they had crossed the threshold.

"Then that —— wretch has abandoned her already," exclaimed Edward, with a fearful execration, as he fell into a chair gasping, nay almost foaming.

Cuthbert was silent for a short time, till Edward's first anger should be exhausted. But there was not much time to be lost. So at length he spoke.

"Edward, I think it better that I should go and see that unhappy girl."

"Without me?"

"Yes, without you. You might feel the interview so bitterly as not to be able to put a restraint on yourself. In return, she might be frightened, or her pride might be aroused. I think I am the calmer of the two."

“Well, Cuddie, do as you like. In fact I think I had rather not see her. But don’t conceal any thing from me.”

“I will not, on my honour,” answered Cuthbert, as he proceeded to change his dressing gown for a coat, and to wrap a cloak round him.

Edward remained in the bedroom. He had no mind again to face Mrs. Gottock and her impertinence. Pressing his cousin’s hands, Cuthbert joined the maid and motioned her to lead the way.

CHAPTER XXVI.

UNE PÉCHERESSE.

“It is some little distance off,” said the waiting woman. “I have a hackney coach waiting at the end of the street. I did not like to drive up to the door of the hotel, but walked the back way. As chance would have it, I met Mr. Casey.”

“I will meet you at the coach,” answered Cuthbert. “I must step into this chemist’s for a draught.”

At heart he was not desirous to be seen in the street with such a companion as the flaunting maid; and considerate even to those least worthy his consideration, he was reluctant to hurt her feelings by an intimation of his own.

But the excuse was more than plausible. In his weak state, the agitation already gone had partially unnerved him; and in his interview with Norah he would require all his resolution.

It was not long ere he took his seat in the carriage by the side of Mrs. Gottock. For the first few minutes of their drive he was not sufficiently collected to speak. The maid broke the ice.

“It is some distance from this, sir; and we have to go up a steep hill.”

“How long have you been here?”

“Nearly six weeks. We left Florenc

the day after we heard of your accident, sir. I hope you are better."

"Yes, thank you; but never mind me, Mrs. Gottock. Tell me about your mistress—about Lady Norah."

Cuthbert scarce dare trust himself with the name which called so many recollections of the past.

"How long has—has she been alone?"

The blood rushed to Mrs. Gottock's face as she summoned to her reply all the powers of her hate.

"That man, sir, is a villain, if ever there was one. A villain, sir, an unholy, wicked wretch, if I never breathe another word."

Cuthbert bent his head. In moments of his greatest anger he could not confide his feelings to such a person as the waiting woman.

"From the very first, sir, when my

mistress was in his power, he treated her like a slave. It was a wonder to me how the affair escaped detection so long. I never see the like of it."

"I suppose, then, you have seen more than one affair of the kind, Mrs. Gottock."

"Perhaps, sir, I have; perhaps, sir, I haven't. I am in nowise bound to give an account of my conduct. But this, sir, I will say, that he behaved from the first like a brute; and this I made bold more than once to insinuate to her ladyship. He never lost an opportunity, Mr. St. Elme, never once, of risking a show-up, letters, notes, meetings, in the most public manner; and if ever she made the least remonstrance, he would threaten her in the most brutal manner."

"Then how can you account for her infatuation?" asked Cuthbert, uncon-

sciously betrayed into a question by his growing interest.

“Why, sir, I can only account for it by thinking that she found Sir Hugh Dawney’s treatment so different from that of other people. Every one else treated her like a queen. She had only to say she wanted a thing to be done, and it was done that moment. We women are but weak, trusting creatures,” added the fragile Gottock, in a vein of sentimental morality.

“Well, sir,” she continued. “From the first moment she came away his conduct became worse and worse. He hurried her on, weak and ill as she was, never giving her a moment’s rest; working on her fears, telling her that you were pursuing her, and that if he met his lordship one of them must fall in a duel. She had no clothes with her but the dress she

wore that night at the ball, and one cloak. Will you think it, sir, though that villain had all his wraps in the carriage, when it was so cold that her teeth were chattering, he put all his furs on himself, and only gave her one little plaid to throw over her feet. I saw it myself, sir, as I was riding with them in the same railway carriage."

"But surely you had time to buy something?"

"Yes, sir, at Paris I insisted on buying a warm dress and another cloak; and this is all she has but a few bits of under clothing Mr. Atkinson managed to pack in Sir Hugh's portmanteau the night of the ball. My lady had no money, and it was all I could do to get some from Sir Hugh. He said that he had scarcely enough with him to pay the post boys."

Mrs. Gottock paused for breath, and evidently expecting some comment from St. Elme.

“Go on,” he said, “I am listening.”

“At last, sir, we came to Florence. Her ladyship was almost dead with fatigue, and it was impossible to go further. He at first intended to get on board ship at Marseilles, for the East; but the day we saw you and his lordship at the railroad at Paris he altered his journey, thinking you had discovered his direction, and that he might put you off the scent. Will you believe it, sir, the first time she took off her dress after leaving Beston was at Florence. Well, sir, at Florence she had two days’ rest—but in such a hole, sir, worse than any kennel; but the third day came the news of your accident, upon which,

with great difficulty, Sir Hugh managed to get us away."

"Tell me, Mrs. Gottock, one thing. Were you with her when she wrote that letter."

"I was in the next room. There were only two small rooms on the same floor—dirty garrets, sir, at the top of the house, two doors off, sir, from the place where you were wounded. Oh! sir, how I regretted having left Beston when I found myself in that hole."

"Can you tell whether she wrote that letter of her own free will?"

"Oh! no, sir. There was such a terrible scene about it. When my Lady heard of your accident she fell on her knees to Sir Hugh, and begged him with tears and sobs to escape without her. They could never be happy together, she said; and

she would go and throw herself at his lordship's feet, and beg forgiveness. But he answered her like a brute as he is. He said that she had led him into this scrape; that her name was on the passport, and that unless she came with him he could not get away at all. Then, sir, he made her write the letter after his own words; and in a short time we walked to the gate of the town, where the carriage was waiting, and drove away. And then, sir, such a journey again, day and night. First we went one way and then another, always thinking his lordship was after us, and then we came here. And then my Lady could go no further. She fell ill of a bad fever, and he took us to the lodging where her ladyship now is. And now, sir, comes the worst part of the story. About ten days after her illness began, Sir Hugh Dawnay took me aside to

tell me he was obliged to leave for England immediately. He gave me twenty-seven pounds, saying that he would send me more from Paris, and that it would last till he wrote. At the same time he gave me a letter for her ladyship, to be delivered when she was better. The next day, without saying another word, he was off with his precious valet. From that day to this, will you believe it, Mr. Cuthbert, we have not heard a word. When my Lady read the letter she turned pale, but said never a word. I thought when the money was given me that of course all the bills had been paid. Nothing of the kind. We had to pay the doctor's, the lodgings, the butcher, and the baker; and in a short time we should have been reduced to want. Lady Norah did not know where to write, or how to get money. She thought of writing to Lady

Beaconsfield, but feared. Then by accident she heard of her ladyship's death. I luckily had in my box near forty pounds of my savings, which has kept us going ; but in a day we should have been obliged to pawn the diamonds."

"But how did you hear of our arrival?"

"By your chemist, sir. He is an Englishman, and serves all the medicine for my Lady. I was at his shop late last night, when you came, fetching some salvolatile for her ladyship, and a bottle of stuff was directed to you and given to the porter of your hotel."

"Is it much further?"

"No, sir, we are quite close. You will find her ladyship so much altered."

CHAPTER XXVII.

LADY NORAH'S APARTMENT.

NORAH's lodging was in a house which, though not absolutely shabby, bore few traces of the luxury to which she had been accustomed.

And the sight of the guilty Norah was enough to move her cousin's pity. She still wore the black velvet dress that at the Beston ball had elicited such passionate admiration. But the smooth cheek that on that night glowed with the beauty of

health and guilty excitement, was wan and pale. The flashing eye was sunken and dull. In lieu of the gorgeous flowers and the brilliant ornaments, a thin, shabby silk mantle of her maid's had been thrown carelessly over her shoulders, to bring some life to the languid circulation.

There was the same Norah in the same dress. But how altered the circumstances! how different the accessories! Diamonds had made room for frippery; high hopes and a spotless fame tarnished, and as the perishable texture.

She was sitting over the embers of a scanty wood fire, contained in a common, unpolished iron stove. On the sofa lay some articles of linen, just returned from the laundress, the bill pinned on the top of them. The arm-chair on which she sat was torn in more places than one, leaving visible the hemp padding. On

the stove stood a phial and a common earthenware cup, containing a plated teaspoon, of which the black metal substratum was apparent at the edges. Near her on a small table, uneasy on its legs, was placed a small black japanned tray, with a brown porcelain teapot, and a cup, saucer, and spoon, scarcely matching those on the chimney. A new and gaudy carpet threw into relief these dingy objects, though the portion near the fireplace was littered with dust and embers, ignorant of the broom. In either corner of the room farthest from the windows stood tall articles of furniture, serving the triple purpose of closet, sideboard, and writing table. A few paintings adorned the paper on the walls, likewise renewed for the full season. They were bad copies of well-known Italian pictures—

portraits of Machiavelli, Dante, Alfieri, the Madonna della Seggiola, the Beatrice, and a likeness of the master of the house. The artistic decoration was completed by a few alabaster statuettes—the Venus fly spotted and yellow, the Slave deprived of his thorn-bearing foot, which lay quietly by his side on the console. Everything bespoke neglect and the absence of attendance.

As he had ascended the cold, narrow staircase of this dingy abode, Cuthbert's heart fell at the idea of the approaching interview. Even Edward, he thought, would feel pity at the state of his erring sister.

She was lying listlessly on her chair as Cuthbert entered. His heart beat as the door opened, and he was troubled as to the mode of address. But Norah, though grieved and abased, fully understood the

nature of her position. She raised herself slightly as he entered ; but she did not extend her hand, or make any salutation beyond the

“ Good morning, Cuthbert.”

It sounded in his ears very like the “ Good night ” of Fulham, the evening when the tie of their youth was severed.

“ It is very kind of you to come and see me. I thought you would.”

Even in her humiliation, Cuthbert thought he could detect a slight remnant of that coquetry with which not long since she had won the hearts of so many ; and his was hardened at the bare idea.

“ I had no right to ask any favour of you,” she continued ; and the subdued tones once more softened him.

“ You have suffered much for me, Cuthbert. I do not ask your forgiveness ;

I cannot do so. But, believe me, the intelligence of your accident added much to all my other griefs, and I have had many. Gottock has told you my story and my position. I begged her to do so, for I am not equal myself for the task. I have been very ill, Cuthbert. I am recovering now, I am sorry to say."

Cuthbert looked kindly and compassionately, for Norah spoke simply and truthfully; but he could find no words to answer her.

"I am glad to see you alone, Cuthbert. I could not have seen Edward, and I dare say he will not be inclined to see me. Why should he? I am no longer a fit companion for any one. Read that letter, Cuthbert; it is the only part of the story I have kept from Gottock.

She gave him a letter hitherto lying concealed in her chair. As Cuthbert took it

from her, he could not refrain pressing the hand that held it. But Norah hastily withdrew it with a shudder.

“No kindness—no kindness. I can bear any thing but that.”

As Cuthbert unfolded the paper he saw two tears in those mournful eyes, and the unhappy woman falling back in her chair, and burying her face in those two fair wasted hands.

“My own Norah!” began the writer. “when this letter is placed in your hands I shall be far from you. More than once you have entreated me to leave you. Reflection has persuaded me that your request is right; and though the struggle has been bitter, I comply.

“Our future intimacy would be fatal to both of us. Already have I received from my friends and my sisters prayers, entreaties, and remonstrances. Without you

I should have disregarded their wishes ; but knowing that your love and your good sense will appreciate the propriety of my conduct, I have resolved on breaking a connection which could do you no good, while it would soon have inflicted on my career an irretrievable injury. Farewell, then, Norah. We have lived and loved together. Ever have I cherished, ever shall I cherish, in my heart the fond memory of the days past in your sweet society. Friends, relatives, would in vain have attempted to part us. But duty calls, and honour must obey the summons. In our country position entails responsibilities. Would that we had revealed our love before that fatal knot was tied which prevented you from sharing openly my destinies. But it is useless to repine. We must part and for ever. I have left with Gottock sufficient for your present neces-

sities. You are wealthy yourself. The death of your poor mother will remove you, not only from the reach of want, but your income will be sufficient for all the luxuries to which you are accustomed. Meanwhile, until you can hear from England, a letter addressed to Messrs.——, of Marseilles, will be answered by return of post, and provide you with any sum you may require for your journey to England. Again, my own Norah, farewell. Believe that in me you will ever find a true friend. Do not hesitate to apply to me in any difficulties. Again I entreat, let me be your friend, though denied the happiness of a more endearing name. Farewell!

“HUGH.”

No picture could have been drawn to describe more accurately than did this letter the character of Sir Hugh Dawnay.

The hackneyed phraseology, the cold selfishness, the attempt at fine writing, the affected morality, the niggardly provision, the name of his banker—all these, even more than the cruel desertion, depicted indelibly on Cuthbert's mind the true nature of his former comrade. Without requesting Norah's permission, he placed in the pocket of his coat the revolting document. Then turning to the helpless girl near him, he addressed to her the first word uttered by him since his entrance.

“And what are your intentions, Norah?”

“God knows!” she murmured; “a convent! Why did not my fever carry me off?”

The cousin knew not what to answer. Counsel he could not give, nor comfort, nor hope. Henceforth her life must be a

dreary blank. No more could she feel the blessing of a brother's love, a mother's fond affection, a husband's ceaseless care. Lost for ever were domestic joys, the friends of youth, the excitement of frivolity. Henceforth her lot in life must be lonely, uncheered, unaided. Banished from her father's home—nay, from the vault that covered her mother's coffin. In the world, no hand would lead her onward, no sympathizing face partake her solitude, no sympathizing heart partake her sorrow. The hand of a hireling would close her eyes, when a solitary grave should conceal her memory.

Cuthbert rose. He required time for reflection.

“I will see you to-morrow once again, Norah.” Despite resistance he took her hand.

“Wait for one moment, Cuthbert,” she cried. “Let me say one word to you. To you alone I say it, for you alone will believe me. Cuthbert, this I swear to you, by all the hopes I once had in this life, by the only hope now left me of the next—Cuthbert! Cuthbert! believe me!—though fallen, though degraded, though I can never hope for forgiveness, though forgiveness can never be extended, believe me in this, that I am not wholly lost. Though my crime be great, it might have been greater. Though I have forsaken my husband, in the eyes of God I am still his wife.”

“Norah! do you know what you are saying?”

“I know what I am saying, Cuthbert,” she answered, solemnly. “Believe me, I am not perjured.”

Cuthbert bent over his cousin, and as in days of yore he kissed her forehead.

“God bless you!” she murmured, as he turned and left the room.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FAINT HOPES.

CUTHBERT found his cousin pacing nervously in their common sitting-room. It was not in his nature to take things calmly; and the unexpected occurrence of the morning had revived all that turmoil of feelings which had been allayed by the counsel of Barralevski on the receipt of Norah's letter.

He had looked with eagerness to his cousin's return; and as time slipped by he

chafed with impatience, and anxious, painful curiosity.

Cuthbert entered the room with a heavy step and a thoughtful countenance.

“What a time you have been, Cuddie. I thought you would never have returned.”

“The hill is steep, and carriages can only ascend and descend slowly.”

“Well, how did you find my amiable sister?”

“Poor Norah!”——

“Poor!—nonsense! What! are you so weak, Cuddie, as to be taken in by her at one sitting? I thought you knew her well enough of old.”

“Edward, speak no harsh words of Norah. Much as she has injured you, you would pity her if you saw her now;” and Cuthbert told his cousin the story already in possession of the reader. He

revealed the whole extent of Dawnay's brutality, and of Norah's sufferings—her fatigues, her illness, deserted without means, in a foreign town, in a squalid lodging, while her soul was trembling in the balance. He told Beaconsfield all this, without adding or abating a syllable. As he proceeded, his words produced an immediate effect on the impulsive Irish mind of his auditor.

“Poor Norah!” at length said the young Earl, repeating Cuthbert's words—an acknowledgment of conviction.

“Now read this,” ended Cuthbert, as he handed to Edward Dawnay's letter of farewell.

His eye glanced rapidly over the pages.

“Curse him ! curse him ! If I find him, by all that's holy”——. Then his mind reverted to his sister.

“Poor, poor Norah! My poor, unhappy sister!”

His head fell upon his bosom.

“Edward, hear me,” said Cuthbert placing his hand affectionately on the young Earl’s. “All is not yet lost.” And he whispered in his cousin’s ear.

“And do you believe this?” asked Beaconsfield.

“I do, honestly, sincerely do I believe it.”

“Then whatever the world may say I will stand her friend.”

“Thank you, Edward. I know your noble disposition. But we must take some steps immediately. Will you come with me to-morrow and see her?”

“No, Cuthbert, not yet. If I had gone to her to-day it would have been with no motive but one of reproach. Notwithstanding all she has suffered, and all I

may hereafter do for her, I cannot yet go the length of taking her back, as it were, to my family. At the worst, the injury done to me was not so great as the fearful wrong inflicted on Burney. She has dragged his name in the mire. She must suffer the penalty of her fault—I will not now say, her crime. What a beast, a cursed beast, is that man!” he continued. “Did he think, after all she had sacrificed for him—did he think that any lady, however abased, could write to his bankers for his cursed money after he had left her, like a cur as he is. If I ever meet him”——. And Edward ground his teeth.

“Edward, restrain your feelings. We must talk of Norah. What is to be done about her? I have already settled the pecuniary part of the question with Gottock. Norah talks of a convent.”

“That is absurd. You know, Cuddie, I

trust to you. Come, I dare say you have already some plan in your head."

"To say the truth, I have. In a few minutes I will explain myself."

Cuthbert was silent for some minutes. He felt all the objections to Norah's project of a convent, but he could not refrain from his usual habit of examining the working of the mind at different conjunctures. He had asked time to reflect on his plan for Norah's future; but on this he had already decided. His thoughts turned during the interval to past times, when borne down by grief and distress he himself had entertained projects not far dissimilar. Man, however careless by nature, when in tribulation turns to religion for consolation. For those who in the days of prosperity have thought lightly of their religious duties, past neglect appears to have forfeited the privilege accorded to

those who at all seasons have walked in the right path. Their past sins and present sufferings seem to demand no ordinary sacrifice. For these the repentance of the heart is insufficient. Some notable act of self-devotion alone can prove an adequate atonement. As their soul awakens, they seek to be teachers ere they have been disciples; or perchance, before they have learnt the truths of their own faith, they seek for comfort in the bosom of another church. Edward's voice broke this strain of thought.

“Well, Cuthbert, what is your plan?”

“Simply this. To provide Norah if possible with another maid. Gottock, though she has been kind and attentive, is unprincipled. To get Norah a proper carriage, and to send her to England as soon as she can be moved. I think it better for her to be in England, where we can watch

her movements, and where we can be ready, at a moment's notice, to advise and assist her. Here she knows no one, and can make no acquaintance."

"I suppose the whole world knows of her proceedings."

"Let us hope not. Nothing I fancy has as yet got into the papers; and if affairs have been properly managed at Beston, I do not see how any one can have heard any thing about her. The neighbourhood can only know that we all set off the same night. The persons in whom we have confided are trustworthy. Even the police at Florence only know her under the name of Downing."

"But I scarcely like to leave her to find her way alone to England."

"I have thought of that. Casey shall go with her. We will remain here till she starts, and leave half an hour after

her. We will stay at every place she stops at, making out a route with Casey, and always going to different hotels. Every evening he will come and make a report. We must not offend Gottock. We will make some excuse for getting her away without quarrelling, and assure her an annuity subject to her silence."

"But Dawnay—don't you think he may talk of the affair? I believe vanity has prompted him all along, and he is blackguard enough for anything."

"I scarcely think he will say anything. He values his own position in the world too much. But, my dear Edward, don't be too sanguine. I do not say that we shall escape publicity, I only hope it, and think we should do all in our power to ensure the probability of it; and our first thoughts must be for Norah's safety. We must trust to Providence for the rest."

“But he talks of mother and sisters.”

“I believe that part of his letter to be a sheer invention. In the first place, I do not see how he could have received letters. In the second, I should think them the last persons in the world who could have heard of the matter. One of his two sisters is an invalid, and is staying with her mother in Sicily. His other sister is married to a German, and lives in some out of the way part of Austria. But we had better lose no time.”

“Well, arrange everything as you like, Cuddie. The course you propose appears the only one practicable. For the present it is the only thing we can do.”

CHAPTER XXIX.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

As the travellers approached Paris the signs of troublous times accumulated around them. Banquets were no longer convivial assemblies, but meetings of denunciation and of menace. The workman grumbled at a government that had wrought but little improvement in his fate. The soldier chafed at the inactivity of a lot once leading through fields of glory to a life of luxury. The tradesman

even doubted the truth of his prosperity. The noble smiled contemptuously at the failure of a bastard monarchy. The poet turned statesman. The statesman turned dreamer. A King, who had learnt wisdom as a Republican and an exile, in assuming the functions of his own minister, was losing the property of his client.

The cousins were approaching Paris. Some strangers, their companions in the railway carriage, had canvassed in their hearing the events and the rumours of the day. These had alighted at a bye station; and the cousins in their turn proceeded to discuss the all-absorbing topics.

“Do you recollect our conversation a long time ago,” asked Edward, “when we were crossing the Cenis? Are you still of the same opinion as regards an hereditary aristocracy? Here you had a peerage, not elective certainly, as in

Belgium, but still not restricted by aristocratic influence. And yet you see the creators of this constitution are the first to suffer by it."

"No, friend Edward, you cannot catch me in that way. The Chamber of Peers has nothing in common with the Senate in Belgium. It has in fact no element of popularity. It neither conciliates the people by election, nor the aristocracy by exclusiveness. It is simply and purely an engine for the underhand extension of monarchical power."

"But the monarchy was the election of the people."

"Whose representative, Lafayette, died repenting of his act in offering the throne to its present occupant. The Belgians founded their constitution on a broad basis, placing the crown as an apex. The French on the contrary balance their pyramid

on the point; trust to juggling for some time, till the performer loses his skill, and the whole fabric totters to the ground. In fact, as I told you on the Cenis, the present French constitution is a thorough sham."

"So I suppose the French have discovered."

"Certainly; and if the present dynasty is upset, I cannot see what grounds its partisans can take for any future intrigue of pretendership. It is neither Legitimist, like the Old Monarchy; nor Popular, like Bonapartism. Louis Philippe, although a wonderfully wise and astute man, has attempted to combine the two political influences, to blind the eyes of his people with the shadow of popular institutions, while establishing himself in a power such as that enjoyed by his ancestors. Recollect how he began his reign:

He abolished the hereditary character of the peerage, by flooding the Chamber; and his electoral law of '31, though pretending to enlarge the constituent body, was so arranged as to confine that body within the limits of easy corruption. Now he is reaping the fruits of this shortsighted policy. His attempts to extend his family connection have ended by opening the eyes of his subjects to their own political position. They find that the Legislative Chambers are the tools of their Sovereign. Still the Orleanist party endeavour to carry on the farce. They seem to think that a people of 30,000,000 will be content to abide by the decision of a body chosen by 200,000, a fraction of the nation. Can the Government imagine that a majority in such Chambers, going through the forms of legislation, will be able to force their laws upon a people?

It appears to me that such proceedings are just about as valuable as the bill of a bankrupt tradesman. The independence of the Chambers is equal to that of an English *cong   d'elire*; and their edicts will create as much attention as in England would be conceded to laws passed in the Houses of Convocation.

“Yet there are some very great men in France,” observed Edward, looking out of the window at Paris, which they were rapidly approaching.

“I grant you—men of the highest genius. But unfortunately they have directed their talents to hoodwink the nation committed to their charge. There is a passage in Lord Halifax that I have learnt by heart. ‘There is a soul in that great body the People, which may for a time be drowsy and inactive; but when the Leviathan is aroused, he

moves like an angry being, and can neither be controlled or resisted.'

"I anticipate more from this crisis than perhaps at this moment the King himself may imagine. Barralevski wrote me some time ago the state of popular feeling in this country. The Russian police all over Europe is better informed than that of the local governments. The Russians were the first to apprise Louis Philippe of his danger.* His recent acts evince a total disregard of present warnings and past experience."

And as Cuthbert spoke, an answer came from the city. Boom—Boom, rang the sound of ordnance through the clear atmosphere, bellowing the doom of the Citizen-King. His course was over, and the sceptre had fallen from his hands.

* Historical.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE CITY OF JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

THE train stopped suddenly at some distance from the Paris terminus. It was dangerous to proceed further. Some turbulent British subjects vowed vengeance, and threatened to complain to their Government. But their protestations were of small avail. Few heard their chidings, and those who caught the mutterings smiled in derision. The

French passengers, who even in revolutionary times could think of their own affairs, were contented, as best they could, to shoulder their luggage and carry it to their residence in a spirit of liberty, equality, and fraternity. There was no Government to listen to their complaints.

Luckily for our travellers, Casey, who the night before had arrived at the capital, was waiting to receive them with two stalwart Englishmen. The carriage had been abandoned at the first station, and the travellers as we know had but little luggage for their porters.

They took their way through the outskirts of the city, not trusting to the crowded thoroughfares.

Edward walked on alone, seeking points that commanded a view of the exciting

scenes enacting not far off. The two porters trudged on with their burthens; while Cuthbert, leaning on the arm of Casey, followed slowly and painfully in the rear.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A WELCOME.

“WELL, Casey, we are nearer home,” began Cuthbert. “Are you glad to approach your native air?”

“Thank you, sir. It is very kind of you to think of me. But I have little pleasure in the thought of all the time before I shall see my own home once again.”

“You must not complain, Casey. When we make mistakes we suffer for them, and

you have got off pretty easy. We all have sufferings and trials to undergo. Heaven knows I have had my share!"

"Indeed and you have, sir," answered the Irishman. He spoke in a tone of deep feeling, and with a certain tone of meaning that caused his companion to turn his eyes towards him with inquiry.

But they walked on through the streets without speaking, as the guns boomed at no great distance.

After a pause of a few minutes, Cuthbert resumed the conversation.

"Have you any news?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, a good deal," replied Casey. And again he spoke in that tone assumed by the lower order when hesitating as to making a communication.

Cuthbert again scanned his features closely, and continued his inquiries.

"Have you seen any one?"

"Yes, sir, I have seen Sir Hugh Daway."

"Where is he?"

"At Meurice's."

"And have you met Count Barralewski?"

"Yes, sir. When I found that Sir Hugh was at the hotel you intended to go to, I stood all day watching for the Count, making sure that he would be calling to see if you had arrived. At last he came, yesterday evening; and before he could speak to any one else I told him of the circumstances. He then begged me to tell you and his lordship that he could give you rooms at his house. We are quite close to it now."

"Why did you not tell me this before?"

"If you please, your honour," answered Casey, scratching his head, and resuming for the nonce his Irish manner and powers

of circumlocution—"if you please, your honour, there are one or two persons with the Count. But his lordship is calling me."

They were in one of those long retired streets which abound in beautiful Paris, even near the most thickly crowded quarters. It contained no shops, but only long lines of dead walls, overhung by limes already beginning to assume their verdure.

As they looked down before them they perceived Edward beckoning. At the far end a crowd was beginning to collect. Ere a second had elapsed a gun-shot was heard, followed by a cry and the trampling of a horse. In another minute the crowd was busily at work. Doors and trees were hastily thrown together. Posts were torn from the corners, stones thrown up from

the pavement. A barricade was rapidly erecting.

Cuthbert hastened his pace as best he could, while Casey ran on to communicate with the young Earl. The porters took shelter in a neighbouring porte-cochère, with the evident purpose of concealing the luggage from the assaults of the mob.

“We can’t go a step further in this direction,” exclaimed Edward. “The streets are full, and it will be impossible to pass the barricades. What is to be done?”

“Barralevski lives near here, Casey tells me, and has offered us rooms. We must get to his house as quickly as possible.”

“Why did not you tell me before, Casey?”

“Because, my Lord,” began the Irishman —

“Well, never mind your reasons, we

must go there now. Walk on with the men, and I will give my arm to Mr. St. Elme."

Casey obeyed in silence. A cloud came across his face; and the cousins observed him gesticulating to himself, as turning backward he preceded them between walls down a clean but narrow street.

"What a noise," exclaimed Edward, as they hurried on. Guns, cannons, screams and oaths, filled the pure air. The breadth of the gardens alone separated them from the scene of the conflict. Now and then a spent and misdirected ball whistled over them. Now they caught the cry of the killed or wounded, or the wail of a bereaved woman—the neigh of a horse, or the roar of a fraternizing military.

At length they beheld Casey and the porters standing before large iron gates leading into a garden. Once more quick-

ening their steps they arrived as the heavy portal swung upon its hinges.

At a few yards distance stood a handsome house; and Barralevski, leaning on his crutches, smiled from the steps a mournful welcome.

The cousins hastened towards him.

"Mr. Cuthbert, Mr. Cuthbert, I want to speak one word," cried Casey in a voice of despair.

But Cuthbert brushing past him heeded him not. It was too late. As he ascended the steps and grasped the hand of his friend, from the windows of the mansion quavered forth that fatal laugh, the laugh of Ida's brother.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A REVOLUTION.

AN hour had passed, and Cuthbert was still reclining in the same position as he had assumed on first entering the sun-lit drawing-room. As he opened his eyes, he perceived the Russian watching him anxiously, and bathing his forehead, while Edward and Casey stood communing together near the doorway.

With an effort he lifted himself from the sofa, and half bewildered looked round him.

Wine was lying near him on the table. Pouring out a tumbler, he drank it at a gulp.

Then he turned to the Russian.

"I am ready," he answered. "Tell me she is here!"

"She is, my poor boy."

"Well or ill?"

"Ill," answered the Russian.

"Tell me all, I implore you. Once before you trusted to my word. I am equal to the truth."

"She is very ill, Cuthbert," answered the Russian—pity beaming in his eye; a pity that forbade hope.

"I am ready. Lead me to her."

And as they left the room, the

crowd howled from without, and the cannon clattered on the pavement, and boomed tremulously through the atmosphere.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

MECHANICALLY Cuthbert followed the Russian.

Ascending a few stairs, the latter paused before a door. A woman's head appeared. It was that of Ida's maid.

"She is ready, sir," whispered the woman, and the door opening admitted the two men.

At a glance Cuthbert gathered every detail of the apartment. There was an

influence about Ida that impressed on his mind her every accessory.

The room was large and airy ; the floor polished and waxed. The oriel window looked upon the garden.

And here lay Ida on a couch. Her eyes were watching the setting sun.

She was clothed in white. One small thin hand hung carelessly on one side, the other lay on a book near her. It was *the* Book—her only source of consolation.

By her crouched the idiot. His head was buried in the folds of her dress. Now and then he lowly moaned his laugh. Even he was silent in that mournful chamber.

Approaching her softly, Cuthbert took that hand. Seating himself on a footstool that stood near, he gazed at her for some minutes.

Ida was calm. The storm had passed

over the flower. As the flower lay prostrate, the winds of heaven could no longer trouble her.

But still the breath of life had not deserted her. The vivid colour glowed in her cheek. Her eye was bright. Only the burning heat of the hand, and the oft recurring cough, told to Cuthbert the story, and the inevitable conclusion. At length she spoke.

“At last we meet again. It is the meeting I spoke of—the meeting before all is over. I knew not it would be so soon. But it is better thus. Without you life had few pleasures. With you it could not be.”

“My own Ida!”

“We both have our griefs, Cuthbert. I have caused you some of yours perhaps. Yours will still continue—mine will soon be over. You will love others, Cuthbert.”

aid, "Never, never, my own Ida —"

"Love others for my sake, Cuthbert. It is not good for man to live alone. Yes, think of me; and seek with others that happiness I could not give you. You will easily find them, love. Perhaps there already may be some who have given you their love."

"Believe me, if spirits beyond can feel joy or grief at what goes on in this world, mine will be the happier to know that you are happy. Few are worthy of you, Cuthbert. Yet, there is one perhaps——"

"Ida, speak not thus to me, my sweet Ida. With you my hopes, my happiness, will live or die."

"Oh! say not so, Cuthbert; nor sadden my last moments with such a bitter assurance. Already my heart is torn to die in the midst of troubles such as now rage around me — to leave my boy to the friendship of strangers."

"Nay, I will protect him, Ida, if this bitter cup passeth not away."

"Nay, Cuthbert, it cannot be. My arrangements are made. My kind friend has already promised me to see them carried out. My friend the Russian," she added, as a faint smile for a moment overspread her beautiful features.

Barralevski from a remote corner of the room had watched with troubled heart the agonizing scene.

She beckoned to him, and he approached the window.

"Cuthbert," she said, "soon I must leave you. I have had but little happiness in this world. Even in my death my wishes are denied me. Seldom shall I again behold that setting sun. Yet I had hoped to see it set in peace. I had hoped that my last days should be in a fair woodland scene, such as that where

first I saw you—where misery had been turned to joy—where peace reigned and goodwill. This is denied me. But still in my last moments I have one consolation. Cuthbert, I leave you not alone. There is one who has loved you, and watched you many a year. As the son of Emma Mordaunt has journeyed through life, the father of Emma Mordaunt has watched him with a careful eye and an anxious heart.”

“ Yes, Cuthbert. It is your grandfather who from your youth has fixed his hopes of earthly happiness on you—who has followed with painful eagerness your every step.

A violent fit of coughing followed the emotions that the invalid could not entirely suppress.

As she struggled painfully, her two com-

panions watched her in anguish. At length the paroxysm subsided.

“We must leave her for the present, Cuthbert,” observed the Russian quietly. “You shall often see her again.”

The sufferer moved her head with a melancholy smile. The grandson followed his grandfather down the stairs, and the idiot moaned his moan.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE THIRD GENERATION.

It was a night of confusion without, but undisturbed did the grandfather and his son sit through the watches of the night. They were quite alone. At times they heard from the sick room bursts of coughing commingling with the idiot's fearful monotone. At times they heard from the streets the sounds of all the passions that agitated the disturbed city.

The old man was telling the story

of his life—a life where care had predominated, a life stripped of happiness save what was conquered by the master-mind. And as he told his story the young man traced through the tones of that unimpassioned voice more than could be revealed by eloquence. He learnt the terrible ordeal that had taught the old man that composure. Though the colour did not change, nor the voice falter, Cuthbert could discover even in that absence of display the strength of the emotion intensified by the struggle to repress all outward manifestation.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE RUSSIAN'S STORY.

“It is time that you should know my story. There is but little to tell, for much must be already plain to you. I need only supply the few missing links.

“In my youth I was a merchant prince—yes, a merchant prince. My father had long been established in Russia, before Englishmen had learnt to profit by the resources of that country. My mother was a Russian of good birth,

of a family whose talent had raised many of its scions to the highest offices and positions in the State.

“My father’s house had thrown out branches in every direction. One friend was established in London, a man of great and varied learning—another at Paris—a third at Calcutta. In fact there was scarcely a commercial town of importance without some agent of our house. At Belfast the family of Sinclair had long been our correspondents.

“Voltaire shows us that no man is content with a position, however enviable, in a foreign country, unless he be able to display his good fortune in the land which gave him birth. My father was not insensible to this attraction. Till I had reached the age of fifteen he had been content to remain in Russia, where I had received an education partly

English and partly Russian. To this I owe that intimate acquaintance with different languages possessed by nearly all Russians of any family or social position.

“At the age of fifteen, however, my father resolved to pass some years in England, and to complete my education according to the English method. He accordingly returned to his country after many years’ absence; and sent me first to a private tutor’s, subsequently to Oxford. He himself bought a plot of land on the banks of the Thames, and built a villa. The villa is that lately occupied by Lady Beaconsfield.

“It is useless to enter into the history of your great-grandfather. He was well known in society as a man of conversation, and a patron of art. Many offers were made to him to enter Parliament, and to

take an active part in the affairs of his country. This he constantly refused. My poor mother died some years after her arrival in England; and, strange to say, on my attaining my majority, he left England for Russia, to end his days amidst the scenes of his early happiness. He died in Russia, but according to his last desire was buried in an English church-yard, by the side of his beloved wife."

"Strange! I once observed a tombstone erected, I suppose, to his memory. It said little of his life; but I observed the Russian name of his wife."

"It was Olga. So was your mother's; but at my request she assumed at a later period of her life her second name of Emma."

"I was very young when I became the head of the great house of Mordaunt, Masters, and Argyropulo. Mr. Masters

was the chief of the London house, and I married his daughter."

The Russian paused for a moment, leaning his head, as was his wont, on the crutch-handle of his staff. At length with an effort he resumed.

"She was taken from me within a short time of our marriage. Cuthbert, we never recover the moral wounds of our youth. A young constitution will carry you through fevers and through plagues. But the heart hardens, as the body becomes decrepit. I have one by one lost my friends, my kinsmen, my fortune; but as the years have passed, the wounds have cicatrized—all save that one, half a century past, when I lost the bride I loved with a devotion you can never know—a devotion of which I myself was ignorant till I had seen her coffin.

“And yet I should not repine. She was spared grief that would have killed her perhaps. She died surrounded by all she loved. She might have died in poverty and in the midst of execration.”

“My affairs were prosperous. In one day I was a ruined man. My ruin was the work of one day. Had it been averted, the following day my wealth would have been doubled.”

“Olga, your mother, was quite a child when I fled the country. It was not amongst the least of my griefs leaving England without bidding her farewell. I never saw her again, Cuthbert—never.”

He paused, and then resumed—by a powerful exercise of will removing from his features and voice all signs of emotion—

“My failure had been immediately caused by the rupture of the Peace of Amiens. I had spent the whole sum

left me in the charter of a small vessel to take me to the coast of Holland. But this was of no avail. On my arrival at Rotterdam, I found myself amongst the number of the detenus. By a curious chance I had declared myself to the skipper of my vessel to be a Russian; and in this character I was doubly precluded from any communication with England.

“At the time of my departure, as I told you, your mother was staying in the country. She had hitherto been resident at the house of a lady who superintended the education of two or three children. Amongst them Olga had contracted a friendship with Lady Beaconsfield, many years her junior, who was an acquaintance of my daughter’s governess. She was the daughter of a poor country clergyman, but distantly connected with the peer to

whose title he succeeded. His claim to the succession dated I think from the time of Charles II. At this clergyman's house, which was near her school, my daughter was passing a few days of the Easter holidays, when I was forced to fly the country. My ruin, though caused by no fault of mine, had involved many in my fate. The world was clamorous, and I had not the courage to face the host of my enemies. This has been the weakness on which my life has hinged. Bitterly have I regretted that moment's feebleness."

Again the Russian paused—again in the same manner he resumed his narrative.

"Two thousand pounds remained to me; three-fourths of this I secured to Olga; with the remainder I paid the wages of my household and the expenses of my passage. Fifteen hundred pounds

would suffice for her maintenance and education till I could write. In Russia, my destination, I was assured of a livelihood. I often had my Russian relations offered me posts of the highest importance. It was the fashion in those days to engage the services of Englishmen. My pretensions would now be of course diminished. But, Cuthbert, I relied on myself. The first time I saw you at Florence, you proved to me that one quality of my family was not extinct.

“It is needless to relate the circumstances of my detention in France. I studied, and I drew. My drawings procured me subsistence. My studies formed my only pleasure. But I cannot describe the tortures of my mind as month succeeded month, and year year, and still I could obtain no tidings of my daughter.

“At length the Treaty of Tilsit gave me my liberty. I had accumulated a small sum in anticipation of my deliverance. It was all spent by the time I landed at Riga. But I was cheered in all my hardships by the prospect of reward. From Russia I should hear from my darling girl. But once again my hopes were disappointed. The young Tzar had yielded to the influence of the Conqueror; and Russia was at war with England. Again all chance was annihilated of hearing from my beloved daughter. Occasionally I would take the risk of sending a letter by one means or another, uncertain whether it would reach its destination. Whatever occurred, years elapsed ere I heard tidings of my Olga. Once or twice had my letters reached her. But her answers did not meet the same success.

The first intelligence I received told me the tale of her servitude. For five years had she lived on the small sum I had left her. For two years had she lived in the house of the kind clergyman, treated as a sister by his daughters, and sharing the comforts of his then humble home. She might have remained with them for a lifetime, but self-respect, pride perhaps, was mingled with her meekness. She could no longer live dependent on the bounty of others. She was accomplished and well informed. She was determined to turn those qualities to account. Cuthbert, you can little know the pang of that humiliation. Deep as was the pain I felt, it was rendered still more poignant by my inability to render her assistance.

“On my arrival, the relations from whom I expected much were in temporary

disgrace. Their attachment to the English alliance had disqualified them for the favour of their sovereign; and until a change should take place in his disposition, they had little to hope either for themselves or for their relatives. And my Russian relatives in this position, what could be expected for an Englishman? I was enabled to keep myself from actual want, but for some years mine was but a precarious existence.

“At length Olga my daughter met your father. She had been engaged as companion and instructress to a sister of Lord Elmwood, since dead. You know your father's history. Olga married him. Peace had reigned some years when this event occurred. I had been struggling and had obtained almost a competence when the news reached my ears. I was no longer young, and yet I was not old.

Olga was three or four and twenty when she married. I could neither sanction nor approve the match. My affairs were not yet settled; and for my personal safety I dared not appear in England. I had not even ventured to confide the secret of my present situation to any one save an old friend, Mr. Sinclair, the father of Ida, and to Lady Beaconsfield. From them, but chiefly from the latter, I from time to time received news of my daughter's fate in life.

"At length my affairs were settled. But my heart revolted at the idea of returning to England. In Russia I was respected, and on the road to prosperity. My relatives had returned with the Peace to their former employments and position. I had taken a Russian name, had received a place of certain consideration. Pleased with some documents relative to and

suggesting the extension of foreign trade that I had drawn up, the Emperor was well affected towards me, and I enjoyed the prospect of no distant advancement.

“Meanwhile an event had occurred which still further limited my power of assisting my daughter. To say the truth, in a pecuniary point of view she was little to be pitied. At the time I heard of her marriage, her husband had already entered the church and was in possession of his living. A serious demand however, and one I could not well in honour evade, exhausted the little that I could spare from my income, which, though considerable, was barely sufficient for the expenses rigorously enforced by the office I held.

“By certain legal technicalities, the entanglement of which it is useless to unravel, the final arrangement of the affairs connected with my house entailed the

ruin of some, while it restored the fortunes of others. Certain of our correspondents and agents, at first comparatively uninjured by my sudden reverse, were called upon by the courts of law for the discharge of obligations, for which by some quibble of the law alone they were liable. To most of these the loss was trifling; but to Mr. Sinclair it entailed the utter destruction of his fortune and prospects.

“He was ruined. You probably have heard his story. At my advice he left Ireland, and established himself in the South of France. I had been, though inadvertently, the cause of his disaster. Honour imposed on me the provision of his maintenance. But the subject will distress you. You can easily supply all that is wanting.

“At length a letter reached me. It told me of my daughter's death. A second

letter reached me. Your father had followed his wife to the grave. Under my new name I repaired to England to watch the fortunes of their child. More than once did I see you, Cuthbert. The only person to whom I discovered myself was Lady Beaconsfield. From her I learnt the story of your fortunes—to her I confided your welfare. After many struggles I deemed it right to leave you dependent on Lord Elmwood. The many claims on my resources prevented me from giving you the education offered by the head of your father's family. I sacrificed my pride and my scruples to your advancement. It was a bitter sacrifice. My heart and affections clung to you. But in addition to the consideration of money, I was loath to emerge from the death attributed to me. I was supposed to have sought it by my own hand, and I

hated the idea of appearing before the world as the bankrupt merchant, when the few that were acquainted with me knew me only as the Russian Statesman.

“And so my life has been passed. Had not my ambition been limited, I might have obtained honours far higher than those I enjoy. But the effort would have been useless. I sought wealth only sufficient to discharge those claims to which, in honour though not in law, I was liable, to support Ida and her brother, and to amass a competency for yourself.

“Constant were the reports I received from Lady Beaconsfield. It was at my urgent solicitation that she pressed on you the journey to Florence with Lord Beaconsfield. There in a small society I foresaw more opportunities than in any other capital to study your disposition, and discover whether the hopes of your

childhood had been realized. Cuthbert, the first time I saw you, at that ball, dancing with Edith, my heart rejoiced at the first words that fell upon my ear."

He paused for a moment, then added, with a smile of affection,

"Cuthbert, forgive me, I was Julius Cæsar."

"My more than father!"

The Russian grasped his grandson's hand.

"I have little more to tell you. Chance threw you with Ida. From her I learnt more respecting you. Cuthbert, had you married her, my wishes, my hopes, would have been too fully completed. I conjured, I implored her to return to you. But no entreaty could bend the resolution of that noble soul. She stayed away from you, and her heart is broken."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE UNIVERSAL GUEST.

THE days followed each other, and the weeks. Then the summer sun was shining as Ida's spirit passed away.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE RUSSIAN'S FAMILY.

THE summer had come, and once more the flame of civil discord had burst out in the city. Once more those furious passions prevailed. Once more an uncertain people, in the blindness of their wrath and in ignorance of their desires, raged and rebelled against their own anointed.

Cuthbert had but partially recovered the shock of late events, not sufficiently as yet to resume the toils and responsi-

bilities of life. Lord Beaconsfield had returned to England at his cousin's urgent request. Norah for the moment had taken up her abode at Mordaunt's, still however to be known under his Russian cognomen.

The three were sitting one evening together. Norah, very changed from the playful beauty of a few months previous, was silent from her grief and irreparable errors. Cuthbert was languid from his moral and physical suffering. The Russian alone maintained his cheerful equanimity. But even the Russian was at a loss for topics of conversation. So many were naturally tabooed as leading to painful subjects, likely to wound the feelings of his young companions. But at length, after looking musingly from the window for some minutes, he spoke in a tone that seemed but a continuation of his musings.

“I have been thinking on what constitutes a spy.”

Cuthbert turned his eye towards his grandfather languidly, but not without interest.

“What do you consider to be a spy, Cuthbert?” he continued.

“Do you mean a spy professionally and in a military sense, or allegorically?”

“Allegorically.”

“A person who having certain social advantages or a certain position of trust, divulges to interested persons intelligence thus obtained. In fact I consider every one a spy who, without the permission of his friend, retails his conversation to a third person.”

“But do you call that man a spy who, travelling in a foreign country and being of an observant disposition, picks up in-

formation here and there and writes it home to his friends?"

"Certainly not."

"And suppose his friends to be the minister of his own country, nay even his sovereign?"

"No, I cannot even then consider his proceedings wrong."

"Well, I am satisfied." And the Russian smiled a smile of peculiar meaning.

"I must leave the room for a few moments, Cuthbert, to attend to my duties," whispered Norah. "If tea comes before I return, will you call me?"

"Yes, Norah." And Cuthbert looked kindly at his cousin.

"She is going to visit Alfred Sinclair," observed the Russian. "There is more good in that girl than we ever gave her credit for. Ever since she came here, she has been silently and unostentatiously

endeavouring to supply ——— that poor boy's wishes, and to take permanent charge of him."

"Yes, poor Alfred, he may soon find a substitute. As for me, I shall henceforth live alone."

"Not alone, Cuthbert. There is one who will love you, who has long loved you, and who is worthy of you."

As they were thus conversing Casey entered the room. It was not the first time that he had been the bearer of important tidings.

He whispered to the Russian.

"Speak out, Casey," cried Cuthbert.

"Don't be afraid of alarming me."

"If you please, sir," stammered Casey, "there's a person down stairs wants to see you."

"Who is it?"

"His name, sir, is——Atkinson?"

“What! that scoundrel! Turn him out of the house.”

“He urgently wants to see you.”

“He may want for many a long year.”

“His master, sir, is dying.”

There was a dead silence.

“He was mistaken yesterday by the crowd for one of their men, who was suspected of bringing the soldiery upon them. They fired at him, and he was wounded in more than one place. Atkinson, who was not far off, had him taken to a house in the neighbourhood. He cannot live through the night, but he has been begging to see you.”

“Is it far off?”

“No, sir. In the next street.”

“I must go,” observed Cuthbert.

“And I will go with you.”

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

DAWNAY.

THEY entered a dirty garret, the only refuge near enough for the wounded man.

Dawnay was lying within the dirty sheets. A small table was near him. On it a piece of paper inscribed with a few words. On the table and on the paper lay the hand and arm of Sir Hugh Dawnay. The bandages had become loosened, and his blood was dripping on

the floor. He was alone. His jaw was hanging, his glazed eyes staring open, and his soul was fled to its last account.

Sir Hugh Dawnay was dead. He had died during the absence of his servant—unattended.

The paper bore those words only:

“Cuthbert, forgive me.”

And as Cuthbert closed the eyes and composed the body of his enemy, his heart felt no bitterness.

* * * *

With sterner resolution, and with lessened hope, Cuthbert betook himself once more to the battle of the world. He believes in good, but works to do his duty even without the prospect of reward, looking to reward only as a happy fortune, but still striving to benefit

his species, and to spread around him worldly blessings and heavenly truths.

And careless of the world's advantages, those advantages accumulate around him. Powerful of speech, and ardent in business, he has taken a share in the government of his country. He is beloved by some, feared by many, respected by all.

For some space he laboured alone. But years poured on him their soothing influence; and at length he turned towards one who had loved him long, the fitting partner of his toils and glories.

Her name is Edith.

Daily Cuthbert becomes more sensible of her sterling worth. As in her society he daily becomes more earnest, more absorbed in the great events passing around him, he regrets neither the follies, the theories, nor the sufferings of his youth. Content in middle age with the realities

of life, and satisfied to do good with the materials presented to him, he will endeavour to re-adjust rather than to re-organize, to improve rather than to alter, those institutions and safeguards of freedom which, hallowed by antiquity, have accumulated with years, protecting the immunities, advancing the interests, propagating the religion, and maintaining the lustre of a nation foremost in the march of Civilization, and fulfilling by modern Progress the promise of ancient Glory.

THE END.

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